

Guyana's Agri-tourism Policy

November
2025

“specialized
services for the
development of the
agri-tourism policy
and roadmap
for guyana
project”



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1. Introduction

Guyana with a population of 750,000 persons and a GDP per capita of 7,000 USD, is the only English-speaking country in South America but is culturally and economically tied to the Caribbean Region. With Guyana's emerging oil and gas industry, greater foreign injections and a cultural transformation, many economists have urged for greater investment in the agricultural sector as the best long-term strategy for development. As such, the importance of diversification cannot be understated in ensuring that the country avoids the dreaded “Dutch Disease”.

Guyana has only recently begun to diversify away from sugar and with the advent of oil, is now pushing towards diversifying its economy, using tourism as one of its focus areas. In this regard, it is the strong belief of many stakeholders that forging agriculture-tourism linkages capitalises on the inherent ability of the tourism sector to diversify the economy, stimulate entrepreneurship, catalyze investment and assist in wider socio-economic development. Such linkages offer unprecedented opportunities to shore up agricultural production, create employment along the Tourism Value Chain, and build resilience and sustainability within the economy. The latter is particularly critical for reducing the high levels of leakage of foreign exchange from tourism, preserving patrimony and cultural identity, enhancing food and nutrition security and reducing poverty in local communities, and promoting local awareness and good practices with respect to climate change and environmental issues.

The strategy employed in the development of this policy comprised the following steps:

- Determining the barriers and challenges to developing agricultural-tourism initiatives in Guyana.
- Identification of products/experiences in Agriculture best suited for tourism purposes.
- Timelines proposed for the development of such products/experiences.
- Sources of financing recommended for Agritourism development.
- Institutional arrangements proposed to oversee the development of an Agritourism sector in Guyana, including identification of public and private sector roles

Engagement of the public sector and other stakeholders in the promotion and development of the agri-tourism model - via high-level consultation - to garner political support

2. Acronyms

AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
CAPI	Computer assisted personal interviews
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCCI	Georgetown Chambers of Commerce and Industry
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLDA	Guyana Livestock Development Authority
GMC	Guyana Marketing Corporation
GMSA	Guyana Manufacturing & Services Association
GOG	Government of Guyana
GTA	Guyana Tourism Authority
GUYSUCO	Guyana Sugar Corporation
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFIs	International Finance Institutions
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
MINTIC	Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce , Industry and Commerce
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NAREI	National Agricultural Research & Extension Institute
PSC	Private Sector Commission
RDC	Regional Democratic Council
SADP	Sustainable Agricultural Development Program
SBB	Small Business Bureau
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPARS	Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Rural Statistics
THAG	Tourism & Hospitality Association of Guyana
TWG	Technical Working Group
UoG	University of Guyana
WB	World Bank



3. Policy Rationale

In Guyana, the advent of oil is now pushing the nation towards diversifying its economy, using tourism as one of its focus areas. The issue of strengthening the links between agriculture and tourism, though, has been on Guyana's political and economic development agendas for a considerable time. The potential to improve the value added from tourism through increasing the level of trade in fresh and processed foods and other domestically produced goods and services is a goal that is shared by policymakers and the private sector, in both the agriculture and tourism sectors.

It envisages that this policy advances that strategic public and private sector investment in agritourism is a viable value-creation business model for Guyana. It provides a strategy for a systematic process of investment in the Agri-Tourism Sector in Guyana that strengthens the resilience of the economy, through the adoption of innovative and sustainable methodologies for managing the opportunities that can be derived from the interconnectedness of agricultural trade, environmental preservation and agritourism. The policy introduces Agritourism as a value-added activity associated with the agricultural productive sector and the nation's food security. It places significant emphasis on empowering small farmers, women and indigenous groups to ensure community involvement, ownership, for long-term sustainability within the agritourism sector.

This Policy guides the development of the Agritourism Sector, and it is complemented by an Agritourism Development Roadmap that details the opportunities as well as the constraints and posits recommendations on the way forward. These documents will provide a mechanism for managing and increasing the local development impact of tourism and agriculture. Further, it aims to create a collaborative and inclusive national and regional planning and implementation network that can drive trade and new business between the two sectors.

4. Context for Policy

a. International and Regional

The policy acknowledges the growing global interest in agritourism, driven by consumer demand for authentic experiences, a desire to connect with nature and rural communities, and increasing awareness of the importance of sustainable agriculture. It seeks to position Guyana as a competitive player in this expanding market, attracting both domestic and international tourists seeking unique agritourism offerings.

Regionally, Guyana's agritourism policy aligns with several key initiatives:

Advancing the CARICOM Agri-Food System Agenda

This strategy, adopted in 2021, emphasizes the importance of diversifying agricultural production and promoting value-added activities within the CARICOM region.

This strategy is underpinned by the commercialization of food supply and supporting policy framework to ensure the affordability of quality food, reliability of supply and efficiency in production through renewed partnership with the private sector, synergising government systems, adoption of technology and youth involvement.

In the Region, Agritourism is explicitly recognized as a means to enhance the economic viability of the agricultural sector and create new income streams for farmers.

"Twenty-five by 2030" Initiative

This initiative, is guided by Special Ministerial Task Force on Food Production and Food Security (MTF) and supported by key stakeholders such as the CARICOM Private Sector Organisation (CPSO), aims to reduce the region's reliance on extra-regional food imports by 25% by 2030. Agritourism, by promoting local food consumption and fostering agricultural innovation, indirectly supports this goal.

b. Local (linkages with other policies and programs, legislative frameworks, institutional frameworks)

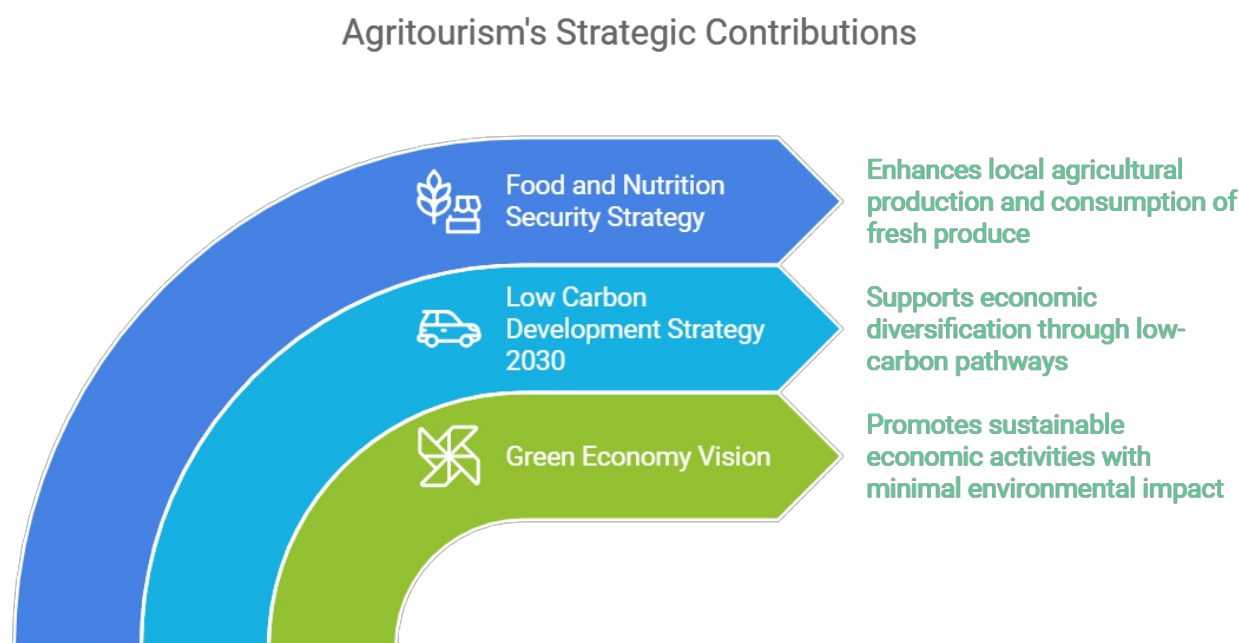
In 2009 through a market-led approach, Guyana embarked on a grow more food campaign which yielded great success in encouraging small holders to increase production, especially the production of other crops. As a result of the campaign, exports of other crops increased by 32.4% in the year 2009.

Guyana's **Low-Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS)** was launched in 2009 setting out a vision for balancing national development with global climate action and the preservation of biodiversity.

The new LCDS 2030 creates a new low-carbon economy in Guyana by establishing incentives which value the world's ecosystem services and promoting these as an essential component of a new model of global development with sustainability at its core. For 2021 to 2030 the LCDS aims to build climate resilience in the agricultural sector by managing drought and flood risk, developing climate proof sustainable farm systems and building the adaptive capacity of the sector. Specifically, the Strategy positions tourism as a sector that can contribute to sustainable development, emphasizing the preservation of biodiversity, the adoption of eco-friendly practices, and the creation of green jobs.

Further, in 2011 the **Food and Nutrition Security Strategy** for Guyana was unveiled. The strategy is a feasible plan that is directed at improving the food situation of the country and its people, especially for the vulnerable populations facing food insecurity. This was an important step in ensuring that Guyana takes a strategic approach in improving its food system.

Figure 1: Agritourism's Strategic Contributions



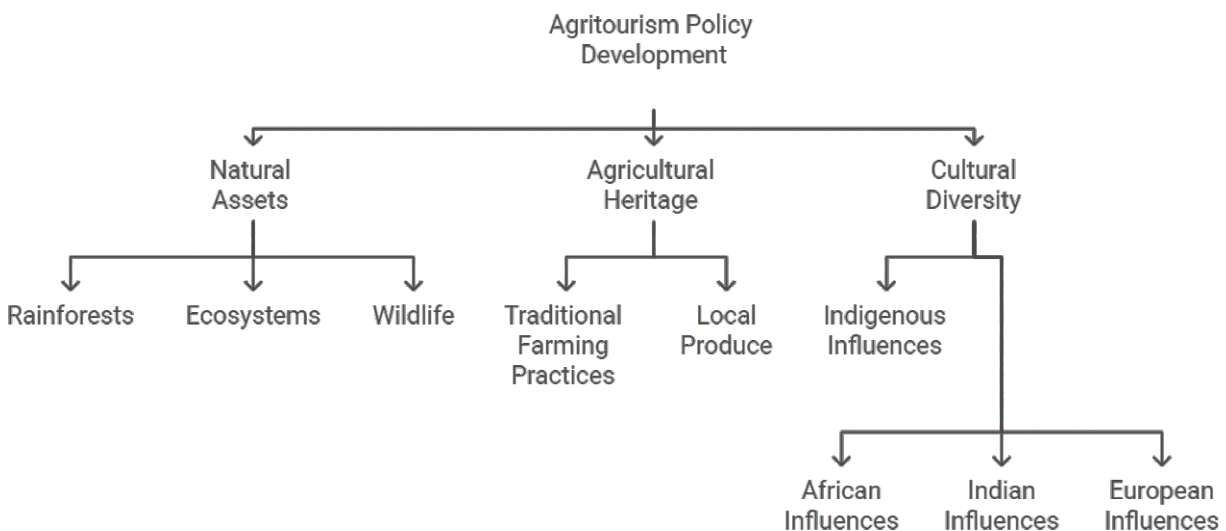
Presently, to shape the course of agricultural and food systems transformation in Guyana, the following action pillars are priorities that are set out in the Agriculture Development Strategy 2021-2025:

1. Diversify agriculture production and improve land access in an effort to increase its competitiveness to provide real economic benefits to the rural sector in an oil-based economy.
2. Create a robust marketing system to improve local and international market access.

3. Promote a national integrated approach to Food and Nutrition Security as fundamental for improving social welfare by ensuring access to safe and nutritious food [particularly in a COVID-19 environment].
4. Strengthen the resilience and sustainability of agrifood systems to promote effective management of natural and productive resources, and to protect the investment and livelihoods in agriculture from external shocks
5. Modernize and upgrade supporting infrastructure to advance water management and transportation requirements
6. Strengthen and modernize support services to promote innovation and sustainability of the agriculture sector.
7. Develop Human resources on which to build a responsive, diversified, gender responsive, world-class agriculture workforce which can deliver the vision
8. Improve multi-sectoral coordination and strengthen data systems to guide policy development and implementation.

This agritourism policy is firmly anchored in Guyana's national development framework, aligning with key strategic priorities outlined in several overarching plans. It is also deeply rooted in Guyana's local context, drawing upon existing strengths and addressing specific challenges within the agricultural and tourism sectors.

Figure 2: National Development Framework

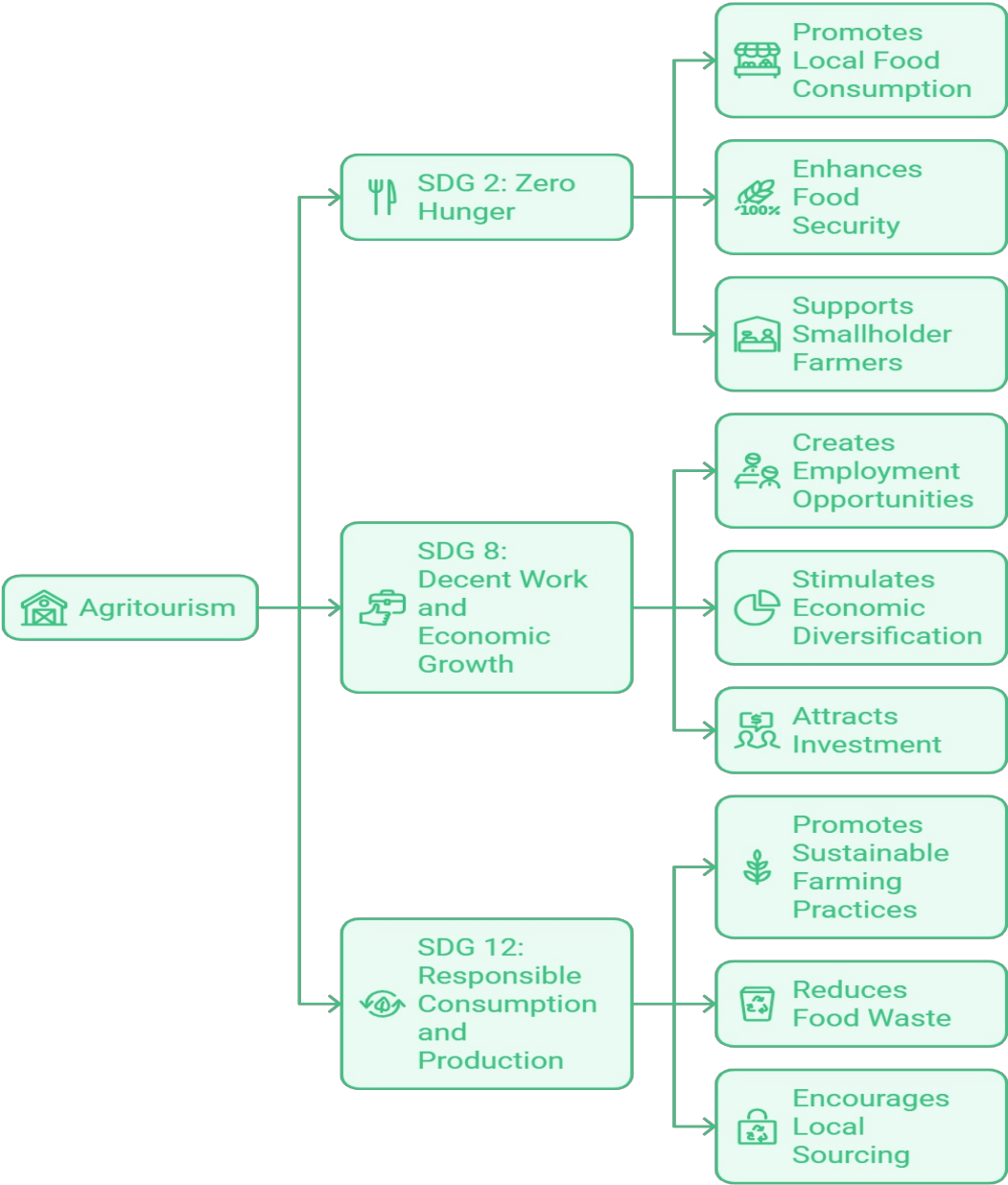


c. Agritourism Contribution to Sustainable Development in Guyana

As depicted in the Figure 3. Agritourism offers a practical pathway for sustainable development in Guyana, directly supporting the country's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By encouraging local food production, creating jobs, and promoting sustainable farming,

agritourism strengthens rural economies and improves food security. It can strengthen support systems for farmers through marketing networks and technical assistance to sustain agritourism growth. With its potential to diversify the economy, reduce food waste, and highlight responsible consumption, agritourism is well-positioned to make a real impact, especially in rural communities. Specifically, it can contribute to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

Figure 3: Agritourism's Contribution to Sustainable Development



5. Situational Analysis

a. Economic Development of Guyana's Agrifood Systems

According to Guyana's National Strategy for Agriculture, the country's economy is largely based on agriculture. Historically, the country has had a considerable reputation as a successful agricultural country, but the government is currently pursuing economic diversification efforts.

- Agriculture continues to be a dominant force in Guyana's economy. The agriculture sector accounts for:
 - almost 20% of the economy
 - more than 17% of employment
 - almost 40% of export earnings
 - an average of about 11% of the national budget
- Guyana is a net exporter of food in the Caribbean region. The country has attained food security status.
- The government sees agriculture "from a context of an export-driven economy and a growth promoter in Guyana."
- Guyana's goal is to be a major contributor to food and nutrition security within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Guyana is committed to the CARICOM "25 by 30" initiative, which aims to cut the extra-regional food import bill by 25% by 2030.
- There are opportunities for entrepreneurs and cooperatives to invest in agriculture.
 - The government aims to create an environment that is conducive to high-value agricultural investments.
 - The government aims to promote industrialization through the packaging and processing of agricultural products.
 - The tourism sector is expected to contribute to Guyana's economic growth. There are opportunities for investment in agritourism.
- Economic diversification efforts are underway, as demonstrated by the development of Guyana's oil and gas sector. Oil and gas revenues will be managed strategically to:
 - boost national budget resources
 - support diversification of the economy
 - support future development all across Guyana
 - be saved beyond those that are invested
- The government is working to strengthen its relationship with international partners to facilitate economic development.
- Guyana is a member of the World Trade Organization.

Guyana's long-term economic development strategy has shifted to focus on sustainability, recognizing the need to balance economic growth with environmental protection. The **Low**

Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) outlines a vision for achieving this balance, emphasizing:

- the importance of Guyana's forests to the global fight against climate change
- the development of a sustainable Ocean Economy
- investments in clean energy and low-carbon growth

Overall, Guyana is seeking to build a modern and resilient economy that benefits all its citizens, while playing a responsible role in addressing global challenges.

b. Food Security and Resilience in Guyana's Agrifood Systems

Despite being a net exporter of food, Guyana faces challenges in food and nutrition security. Food security goes beyond availability, encompassing access and nutritional quality. Rising food prices, climate variability, and global economic pressures have heightened these challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the fragility of Guyana's food systems, disrupting supply chains for high-value commodities such as fruits, vegetables, meat, fish, and milk. Vulnerable groups, including women-headed households, seasonal workers, small farmers, and fishers, were disproportionately affected.

Global events, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict, have further strained food systems. Shortages and price volatility in wheat, fertilizers, and fuel have increased the cost of living, making food less accessible for many Guyanese. This underscores the urgent need for a resilient food system capable of absorbing shocks and ensuring consistent availability and access.

Economic expansion driven by the petroleum sector has improved national socio-economic indicators.



Figure 4: Food Security Indicators for Guyana

INDICATORS	2021	2022	2023
Growth Rate of Real GDP (2012 Base) (%)		20.1	63.3 33
Imports of Goods and Non-factor Services (G&NFS)	7,233.30	7,405.40	-11,211.30
Exports of Goods and Non-factor Services (G&NFS)	4,627.10	11,497.00	-13,675.10
Rate of Inflation (% Change in CPI)	5.4	7.2	2
Mid-Year Population ('000)	773	775.8	778.4
Visitor Arrival ('000)	173.8	288.3	319
Crude Birth Rate (per 1,000 persons)	21.8	23.6	23.4
Crude Death Rate (per 1,000 persons)	5.5	8.7	7.1
Education as % of National Budget	16	13.4	11.8
Health as % of National Budget	16	13.2	11
Nutritional Status of Children Under 5 as a % of Age Group:			
Severely Malnourished	0.4	0.7	0.5
1 Year Olds Immunized Against MMR, Yellow Fever (%)	89	100	100

Guyana
is the fastest-
growing
country
in the world

c. Challenges in Hinterland Communities: Infrastructure, Climate Change, and Food Security

Hinterland villages and nature lodges, vital to agritourism, face significant challenges due to limited infrastructure, including lack of electricity, paved roads, and formal markets. Many communities rely on closer markets in Brazil, while transportation is hindered by hazardous trails during the rainy season and obstructed river routes during the dry season. This isolation impacts food availability and access.

Despite secure land tenure under indigenous rights frameworks, which allows economic activity and sustains local crops and livestock, climate change exacerbates food insecurity. Intense rainfall

and flooding destroy crops and kill livestock, while prolonged droughts lead to food shortages, loss of livelihoods, and social disruptions. These challenges pose significant risks to the resilience and sustainability of Hinterland communities.

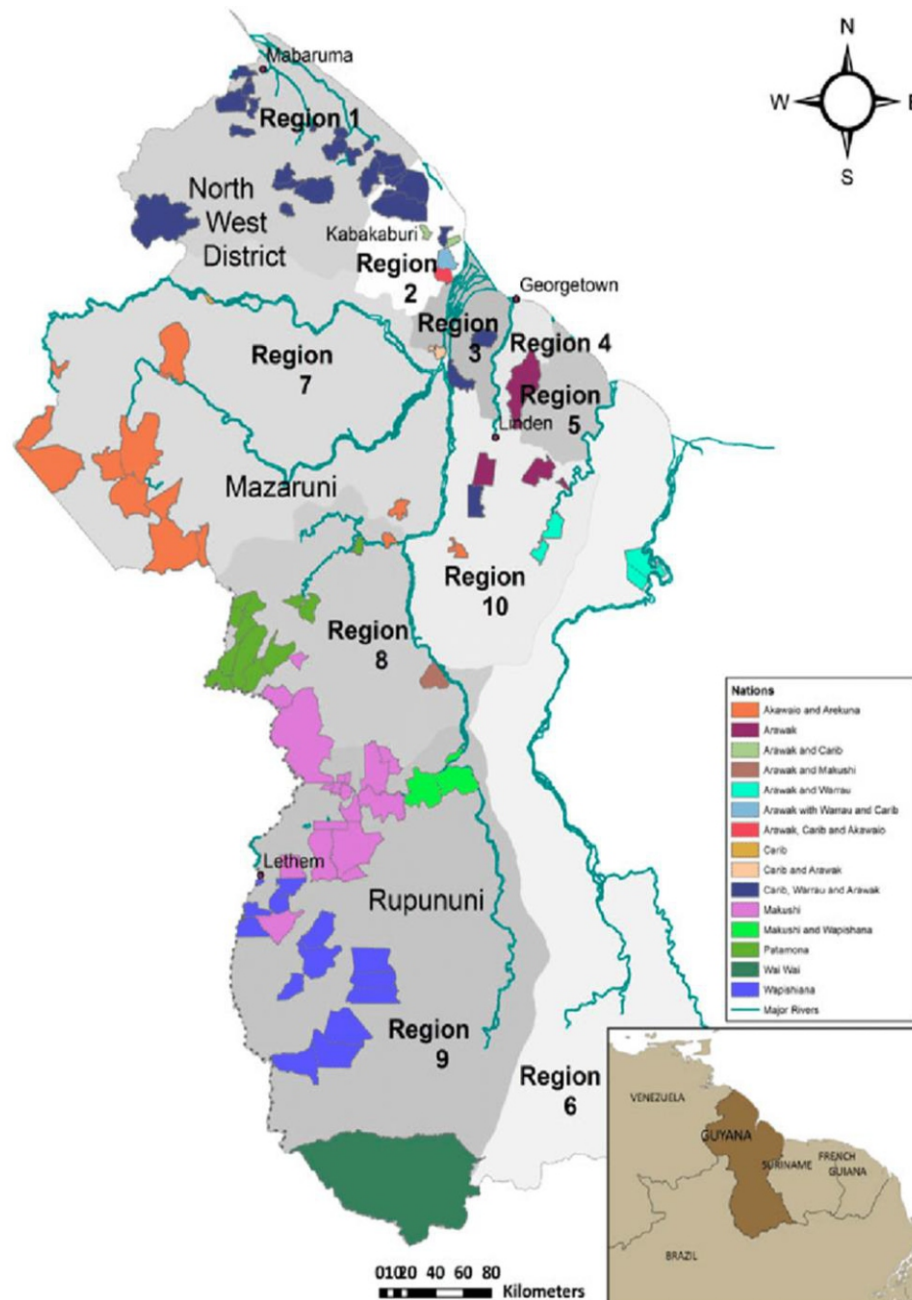
d. Overview of the Agriculture Sector

Agriculture is a major export earner for Guyana and employs roughly 17 percent of the labor force. In 2024, the agriculture sector contributed approximately 23.2 percent to non-oil GDP. The GoG views agriculture as important for the diversification of the economy. The GoG is working to revive sugar production and is making significant investments to boost rice, corn, and soybean production.

The GoG views investment in agriculture as critical for addressing food security and diversifying the economy away from oil and gas. Guyana's tropical climate and topography allows production of crops that differ largely from those grown in the cooler climates of the United States. Guyana's large amounts of arable land, favorable climatic conditions, proximity to the United States and access to CARICOM markets makes it an attractive investment destination for potential investors.



Figure 5: Map of Amerindian Tribes



e. Overview of the Tourism Sector

The tourism sector is the 4th largest export earner sector in Guyana as the total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP is estimated to be 2.3%. The analysis further revealed that Guyana has earned approximately \$64.1 billion (2022) based on the average expenditure per visitor per type

at US\$1,060. The tourism sector also plays a significant role in travel and tourism contributes to over 15,700 indirect jobs in Guyana according to the WTTC Economic Impact Report (2022).

The increase in the number of tourists arriving in Guyana is linked to the rapidly expanding petroleum sector, which now has Guyana as the fastest-growing country in the world. Additionally, Guyana's tourism package offers nature-based opportunities linked directly to hinterland communities. The main tourist arrival periods also coincide with Indigenous Heritage Month celebrations which allows visitors to be immersed in the culinary skills, culture, food production techniques etc. of these communities. The demand for agri-tourism has created significant opportunities for communities and to some extent advanced governments' food security efforts in these communities. Guyana visitor arrivals were 371,272 in 2024. Whilst January to July 2025, recorded an 18% increase YTD, over 2024.

The preservation of the environment is also pivotal to Guyana and through the overarching Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS 2030) the country is promoting sustainable livelihoods. Agri-tourism contributes to Guyana's Low Carbon Agenda and all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. These communities where agri-tourism is being practiced are all hinterland and composed of over 243 villages, all with pristine environments and an intact forest landscape that supports the cultivation of crops and rearing of animals to support food security.

f. Existing Agri-tourism linkages

Guyana's agriculture and tourism sectors have strong potential to develop a vibrant agritourism industry. Existing initiatives and untapped opportunities can be leveraged to strengthen this synergy.

Farm-to-Table Experiences

There are increasing number of experimental travelers who are increasingly interested in authentic farm-to-table experiences, where they can visit local farms, participate in harvesting, and enjoy meals prepared with fresh, locally sourced produce. For instance, the Guyana Tourism Authority has developed and promoted tours in the Region 9 and Region 3 that offer such immersive experiences.

Community-Based Tourism

In the hinterland regions, community-led tourism initiatives have been instrumental in promoting cultural heritage and sustainable livelihoods. Villages like Surama and Rewa have established eco-lodges and cultural experiences that attract visitors seeking authentic interactions with Indigenous communities.

In Region 3, immersive community-based experiences such as Gobin's Farm offer similar authentic interactions.

6. Emerging Opportunities

a. Value Addition and Agri-Processing

Guyana's agricultural sector holds significant potential for value-added products through agro-processing. By transforming raw agricultural produce into processed goods, farmers can increase their income and provide tourists with unique, locally made products. The government has been investing in agro-processing facilities to support this initiative.

b. Strategic Market Linkages

Enhancing market access for agricultural products can create a more robust linkage between farmers and the tourism industry. Minister Mustapha has emphasized that developing dedicated agritourism corridors and improving transportation networks would facilitate the movement of goods and tourists, thereby boosting local economies.

c. Niche Markets and Product Diversification

Guyana's diverse agricultural landscape offers opportunities to develop niche products such as organic produce, specialty fruits, and traditional herbs. By catering to specific tourist preferences, these unique offerings can differentiate Guyana's agritourism products in the global market.

d. Investment and Entrepreneurship

Agritourism presents avenues for investment and entrepreneurship, particularly in developing infrastructure, training programs, and marketing strategies. Public-private partnerships and access to financing are crucial to fuel growth in this sector.

7. Consultation Processes

a. Product Evaluations for Guyana's Agritourism Policy Development

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), in collaboration with Guyana's Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce, conducted targeted product evaluations across all ten regions of Guyana to evaluate the current landscape of agritourism in Guyana and to gather information on the resources,

infrastructure, and perspectives of agritourism business owners. The survey was conducted across ten regions in Guyana, with a total of 110 respondents.

The survey targeted three key stakeholder groups:

- **Group 1:** Farmers, agro-processors, and individuals or groups already engaged in agritourism activities.
- **Group 2:** Community tourism groups, likely including those involved in community-based tourism initiatives.
- **Group 3:** Representatives from government ministries, agencies, and other relevant Organisations.

b. Survey Findings of Evaluations

- The majority of the respondents were active tourism establishments, accounting for over (72%), followed by farms (46%), agro-processing facilities (15.48%) and culinary establishment (5.95%). Among 'other', the most frequent agritourism business were the Eco-Lodges, followed by Villages.
- The data covers the 10 regions of Guyana, with Regions 2, 7, and 9 having the highest representation (11-12 establishments each).
- Most of the agritourism establishments have been in operation for **more than 10 years** (63.8%) and have a **sole proprietor** (24%) or are a **Village/Indigenous Community** (23%)

Table 1: Number of Year in Operation for Potential Agritourism Experiences

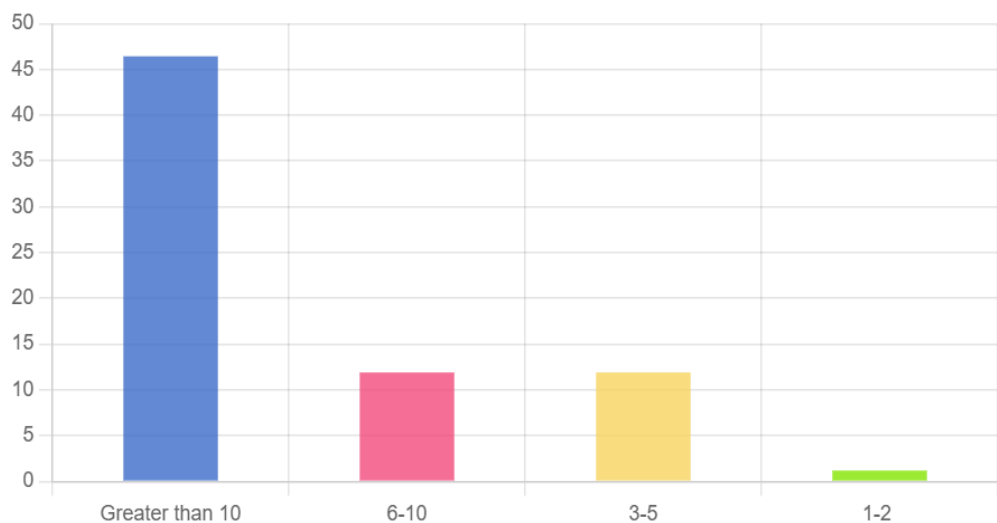
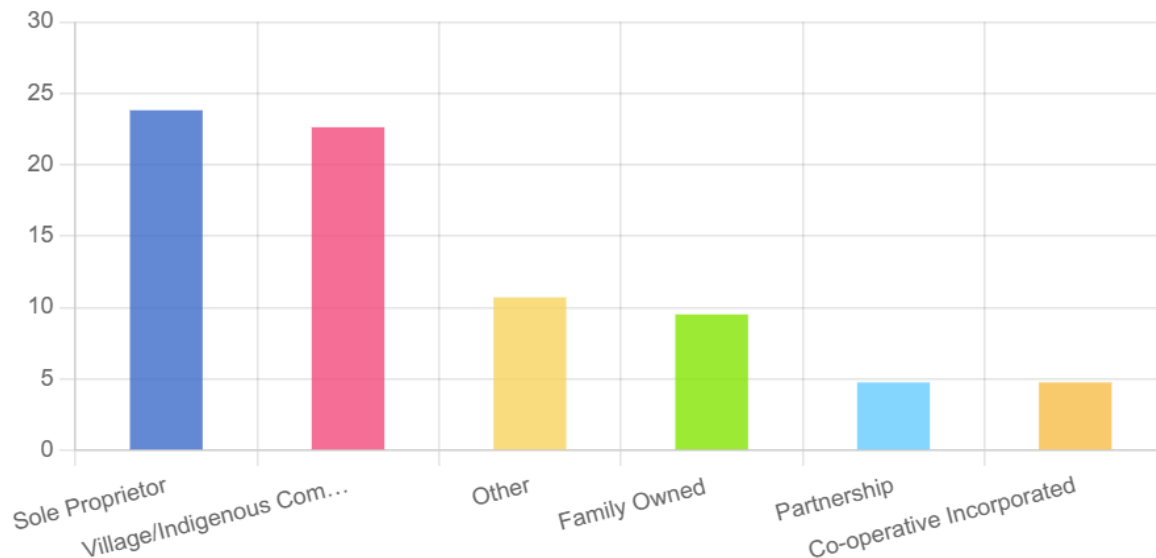


Table 2: Shows Business Structure in Agritourism Sectors



- **Marketing Preferences:** The most popular marketing channels are:
 - Social Media: 98%
 - Direct Marketing: 92%
 - Print Marketing: 15%
 - Radio Marketing: 13%

c. Readiness and Opportunities for Agritourism Development

Survey results from potential agritourism operators demonstrate a strong foundation of enthusiasm, capability, and interest in developing agritourism initiatives. Key findings include:

- **High Readiness for Guest Engagement:** An overwhelming 98% of respondents enjoy entertaining guests, and 97% believe they can create a warm, safe, and inviting atmosphere, reflecting a strong cultural inclination toward hospitality.
- **Business Capability:** All respondents (100%) expressed confidence in managing the additional responsibilities of an agritourism operation, including marketing, employee management, and customer relations. Furthermore, 100% are willing to maintain detailed income and expense records for their activities.
- **Interest in Marketing Innovation:** Another unanimous 100% of respondents showed a keen interest in exploring new marketing techniques and resources to better promote their agritourism offerings.
- **Unique Assets and Challenges:** While 69% of respondents identified unique features or scenery on their properties as an asset, 80% acknowledged the presence of potential hazards for visitors, highlighting the need for risk assessment and mitigation. Only 51% reported having safe facilities such as bathrooms, parking, and shelters for adverse weather conditions.

d. Infrastructure and Operational Gaps in Agritourism Development

Survey results reveal several areas requiring attention to ensure agritourism operators are adequately equipped to meet visitor needs and regulatory standards:

- **Facility Renovations:** Approximately 25% of respondents indicated the need for renovations to accommodate guests, particularly in improving amenities such as bathrooms and disability-accessible facilities. This points to a gap in guest-ready infrastructure that must be addressed to ensure inclusivity and comfort.
- **Labour Sourcing Challenges:** Labour shortages were identified as a significant challenge, with 67% of respondents reporting difficulties in sourcing adequate labour. This highlights the need for targeted strategies to address workforce constraints, including training programs and labour market incentives.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** While 28% of respondents have registered their businesses with regulatory agencies, 43% indicated they are not registered, revealing a need for capacity-building initiatives to improve compliance. Streamlined processes and awareness campaigns can encourage greater formalization within the sector.

e. National Stakeholders' Consultation 2024

As part of the development of this policy, IICA has conducted a national stakeholders' consultation on November 15, 2024 to present Guyana's agritourism policy and 10-year roadmap draft and gather inputs. The consultation involved representatives from the government, private sector, tourism organizations, NGOs, and agritourism operators and included an open discussion and a Mentimeter poll, which yielded valuable insights into stakeholder perspectives on agritourism development.

Key Findings:

- **Challenges:** The poll revealed that stakeholders perceive funding and infrastructure as the most significant challenges to agritourism implementation. Policy enforcement, community engagement, and climate change were also identified as key concerns.
- **Stakeholder Roles:** The government and the private sector were identified as the primary stakeholders responsible for driving agritourism development.
- **Funding Sources:** Public-private partnerships were the preferred funding source for agritourism projects, followed by government grants and private investments.
- **Training Needs:** Business management and product development were highlighted as the most critical areas for training and capacity-building programs. Customer service and marketing were also identified as training needs.
- **Financial Support:** Grants and tax incentives were considered the most beneficial forms of financial support for agritourism operators.

- **Funding Priorities:** Stakeholders recommended prioritizing funding for infrastructure development, followed by training and capacity building, marketing and promotion, and sustainability initiatives.
- **Operator Challenges:** Limited financial resources and a lack of technical skills were identified as the most significant personal challenges faced by agritourism operators. Insufficient marketing reach, regulatory hurdles, and balancing agritourism with other responsibilities were also mentioned.
- **Investment and Readiness:** Investment estimates for developing or expanding agritourism businesses varied, with the largest group estimating less than GYD \$1 million. The majority of operators anticipated being fully ready to expand or develop their agritourism initiatives within the next 1-2 years.
- **Visitor Feedback:** Visitor feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many highlighting the unique and wonderful experiences, beautiful scenery, and warm hospitality. Some visitors mentioned concerns about cost and accessibility (transport).
- **Outlook:** Stakeholders were highly optimistic about the future of agritourism in Guyana, emphasizing its potential to boost the economy, preserve cultural identity, and benefit both people and the environment. Words like "potential," "prosperous," "promising," and "blossoming" were frequently used to describe the future of agritourism.

Table 3: SWOT Analysis of the Agritourism

Strengths	Opportunities
International Perspectives ✓ Capacity to align with international regulations in agri-tourism ✓ Knowledgeable of communities and rich cultural experiences ✓ Availability of flights and local enterprises to attract businesses and tourist Legal Abilities ✓ Mandate to develop policies ✓ Legislative framework in place ✓ Good legislation for mining and forestry Interagency perspective ✓ Resource sharing, collaboration, and policy alignment between agencies and communities Resources ✓ Unique natural and cultural heritage ✓ Cuisine and culture from 6 different peoples to share ✓ Planning abilities at the community level	Legal ✓ Updating Legislation ✓ Strengthening policy with increased revenue collections and local government support Interagency Perspective ✓ Monitoring strategy development ✓ Adaptation of climate-smart agri technologies ✓ Promoting sustainable development Resources ✓ Diversifying tourism offerings ✓ Targeted Training scholarships ✓ Public Relations strategy ✓ Updating technology ✓ Earning from conservation and sustainable management ✓ Developing niche markets External ✓ Private sector alliances

✓ Eco Lodges are well delineated and dispersed countrywide in arable lands ✓ Young, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, diverse, and experienced staff ✓ Professional development and training opportunities available ✓ Technical capacity for the use of GIS ✓ Data availability on food security issues ✓ GTA already has assessment toolkits and a product development roadmap ✓ Compete Caribbean has launched a Tourism Product Development Playbook	✓ Collaboration with other partners ✓ National carbon credit markets ✓ Introducing Environmental curriculum in schools to target change in culture ✓ Culinary tourism: 20% growth internationally
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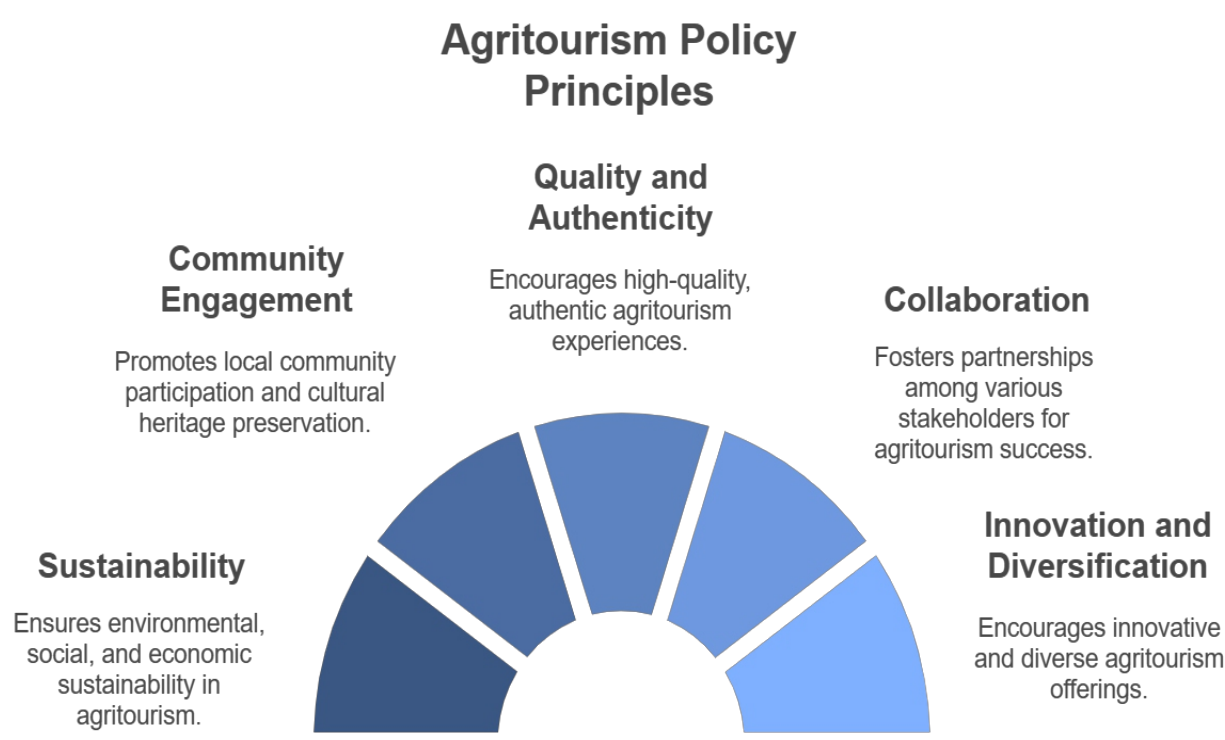
Weaknesses	Threats
Legal Abilities ✓ Poor enforcement of breaches from illegal mining, forestry and wildlife poaching Interagency perspective ✓ Limited communication between regulatory agencies and Villages Resources ✓ Lack of some technical skills ✓ Not fully equipped personnel ✓ Not enough monitoring staff or infrastructure on the ground ✓ Outdated technologies ✓ Limited Infrastructure: Inadequate transportation networks, particularly in rural areas, pose a challenge to accessing agritourism destinations ✓ Lack of signage ✓ Lack of high-value investments within the agriculture sector, which can limit the development of agritourism products and services ✓ Shortage of skilled labor ✓ Limited marketing and promotion ✓ Some existing agritourism initiatives lack clear product offerings, making it difficult for tourists to understand and experience the unique aspects of each site ✓ Ineffective waste management leads to litter accumulation, detracting from the aesthetic appeal of agritourism sites	✓ Climate change impacts ✓ Brain drain ✓ Land use policies ✓ Public expectations ✓ Competing priorities for financial resources ✓ Diversity issues ✓ Natural disasters and pandemics ✓ Increasing population ✓ Growing pollution ✓ Litter pollution threatening environmental quality and potentially damaging Guyana's reputation as a sustainable tourism destination



8. Goals and Objectives of the Policy

The overall goal of agritourism development in Guyana is **to create a vibrant and sustainable sector that contributes to economic diversification, rural community empowerment, and the conservation of natural and cultural heritage**. This overarching goal aligns with the country's broader development strategies, including the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030 and the Food and Nutrition Security Strategy.

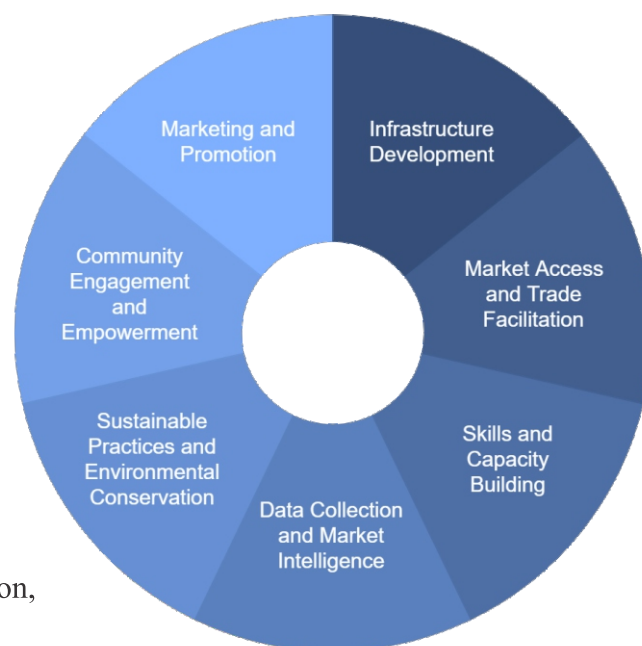
Figure 6: Agritourism Policy Principles



a. Key Actions 23

Product and Experience Development: Identifying and developing unique agritourism products and experiences tailored to market demand.

- **Marketing and Promotion:**
Implementing a robust marketing strategy to promote Guyana's agritourism offerings domestically and internationally.
- **Investment and Financing:**
Exploring various funding sources, including public-private partnerships, to support agritourism businesses.
- **Capacity Building:**
Delivering targeted training programs to enhance the skills of agritourism stakeholders.
- **Infrastructure Development:**
Improving essential infrastructure, such as transportation and accommodation, in key agritourism areas.
- **Sustainability and Environmental Conservation:**
Integrating sustainability principles into all aspects of agritourism development to ensure environmental responsibility and long-term viability.



b. Intended Results

The implementation of Guyana's National Agritourism Policy aims to achieve the following key outcomes:

1. Economic Diversification and Growth:
 - Agritourism established as a significant contributor to Guyana's non-oil economy, generating increased revenue from domestic and international tourism.
 - Sustainable income-generating opportunities created for rural and Hinterland communities, particularly for smallholder farmers, indigenous groups, and women-led businesses.
2. Enhanced Linkages Between Agriculture and Tourism:
 - Stronger integration of local agricultural products into the tourism value chain through farm-to-table experiences, agro-processing, and community-based tourism initiatives.
3. Improved Infrastructure and Accessibility:
 - Infrastructure gaps, including transportation networks, guest facilities, and utilities, addressed and mitigated to enhance accessibility and comfort at agritourism sites.

4. Social Inclusion and Community Empowerment:

- Increased participation of women, youth, and indigenous communities in agritourism activities, fostering inclusive economic growth.
- Cultural heritage preservation promoted through community-led tourism and traditional practices.

5. Sustainability and Climate Resilience:

- Adoption of eco-friendly practices and sustainable land use within agritourism operations.
- Enhanced resilience of agritourism businesses to climate and economic shocks.

Figure 7: Performance Measures/Success Factors

Indicator	Description	Target
Economic Growth and Development		
Number of Registered Agritourism Enterprises	Determine the number of agritourism enterprises registered with the Guyana Tourism Authority and annually track the increase in the number of officially registered agritourism operations.	30 new agri-tourism enterprises registered by the end of year 3 of policy implementation
Visitor Numbers for tourism activities and to newly registered agritourism sites	Review annual visitor arrival figures for engagement in tourism. Track visitor arrivals to newly registered agritourism sites, particularly those that receive support under this policy	5% increase in visitor arrivals to Guyana for tourism activities by end of year 3 10% increase in visitor arrivals to newly registered agritourism sites by end of year 2
Revenue Generation	Gross revenue generated by newly registered agritourism enterprises.	5% increase in gross revenue by end of year 3

Job Creation	Report on the number of new jobs created within the agritourism sector. Report should disaggregate by region and type of employment (full-time, part-time, seasonal).	Agritourism sector should contribute to 1,500 indirect jobs (10% tourism's total contribution to indirect jobs) by year 5 of policy implementation
Sustainability and Environmental Impact		
Adoption of Eco-Friendly Practices	number and percentage of agritourism operations implementing certified sustainable practices, such as water conservation, renewable energy, and waste reduction.	At least 60% (18) of the newly registered agritourism enterprises have implemented sustainable practices by year 3
Sustainability Certifications	number of agritourism enterprises that achieve eco-friendly certifications within a given timeframe.	At least 30% (10) newly registered agritourism enterprises achieve eco-friendly certifications by year 3
Reduction in Environmental Footprint	reductions in resource use (e.g., water, energy) as reported by certified operators.	At least 60% (18) of the newly registered agritourism enterprises report reductions in resource use by year 3
Social Inclusion and Community Engagement		
Participation Rates of Women, Youth, and Indigenous Groups	Monitoring the involvement of these groups in agritourism leadership and operations	Women, youth and Indigenous groups combined account for 60% of the personnel participating in newly registered agritourism enterprises

Community-Led Agritourism Projects	number of community-based projects initiated and sustained under the policy.	At least 16% (5) of the newly registered agritourism enterprises are community-owned
Training and Capacity-Building Participation	number of agritourism operators and community members who complete capacity-building programs annually.	100 individuals from agritourism enterprises and associated communities annually participate in capacity-building programmes relevant to this policy
Cultural and Heritage Preservation		
Cultural Events Hosted	number and scale of cultural events integrated into agritourism activities that showcase local traditions, heritage and agricultural production.	At least 4 events promoted as part of the country's agritourism offering by year 3
Visitor Satisfaction	Collection and analysis of feedback data on cultural experiences through surveys and visitor reviews	Development of standardised visitor feedback mechanism for newly registered agritourism enterprises Attainment of at least 4-star ratings for agri-tourism sites on popular tourist platforms (e.g.: TripAdvisor)
Partnerships with Cultural Organizations	Collaborations between agritourism operators and cultural heritage groups to maintain and promote local traditions.	At least 40% (12) of the newly registered agritourism enterprises incorporate cultural/heritage activities in collaboration with community groups
Promotion of Local Cuisine and Agricultural Production		
Promotion of Guyanese cuisine	Promotion of Guyanese cuisine incorporated in tourism marketing campaigns	At least 5 international official tourism promotional elements (e.g.: advertisement, social media, website) incorporate Guyanese cuisine by year 2

Local production	number of agritourism enterprises that report increased sales of local produce from their own enterprise and/or surrounding farms	At least 70% (21) of the newly registered agritourism enterprises report increased sales of local produce by year 3 Develop partnership a cadre with Social Media Influencers to promote virtual tours
Improved value-added production	Agricultural value-added products distributed as souvenir items throughout the tourism sector	At least 20 mainstream hotels, guest houses and eco-lodges sell locally produced agricultural value-added products by year 2
Marketing and Promotion		
Agritourism incorporated into Guyana's tourism product	Marketing strategy developed for Guyana's agritourism offering	Agritourism marketing strategy executed as part of Guyana's tourism marketing campaigns
Investment and Financing		
Funding mechanisms identified for agritourism development	Exploration of public and private sector funding options	Financial support mechanisms identified or designed to support agritourism enterprises
Infrastructure Development		
Infrastructure development plans	Infrastructure upgrade plans developed for selected regions	Infrastructure development plans incorporating mode for execution developed for 5 regions by year 3
Strengthened transportation network	Reliable and accessible transportation to enable tourists to reach rural and agricultural locations	Improved transportation infrastructure in at least 2 regions by year 4

9. Implementation Structure

a. Governance Arrangements

- Agritourism Council-
 1. Ministry of Agriculture – to guide agricultural policy and support farmers.
 2. Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce, to align agritourism with national tourism strategies.
 3. Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) – for marketing, standards, and tourism development.
 4. Ministry of Amerindian Affairs – to ensure inclusion of Indigenous communities and their cultural heritage.
 5. Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs) – for local governance and regional development.
- Technical Working Group- MoA, GMC, MINTIC, THAG, GTA, NAREI
- Inter-Ministerial Coordination- MOA, MINTIC, MAA,

b. Roles, Responsibilities, Functions

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

The MoA plays a central role in implementing the agritourism policy. This includes:

- Providing technical expertise to farmers and agritourism businesses on topics such as sustainable farming practices, product development, and quality assurance.
- Leading training programs for farmers and agritourism operators, in collaboration with the MINTIC, focusing on skills development in areas like hospitality, marketing, and financial management.
- Supporting the marketing and promotion of Guyanese agritourism products and experiences, potentially through collaborations with the Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC).

Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce , Industry and Commerce (MINTIC)

MINTIC will collaborate closely with the MoA to ensure alignment between agritourism development and broader tourism strategies. This involves:

- Integrating agritourism into national tourism marketing campaigns, promoting Guyana as an agritourism destination to domestic and international travelers.
- Collaborating with the MoA to develop and implement a national certification program for agritourism businesses, ensuring quality and sustainability standards.
- Attracting investment in the agritourism sector by promoting investment opportunities, streamlining the investment process, and providing incentives.

Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA)

The GTA will focus on developing and promoting specific agritourism experiences and itineraries. This includes:

- Working with agritourism businesses to create unique and compelling experiences, such as farm tours, culinary workshops, and cultural immersions.
- Promoting these experiences through its marketing channels and by partnering with tour operators to include them in travel packages.
- Providing training and capacity building to tour guides on agritourism, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to effectively guide visitors through agritourism experiences.
- Develop protocols for the registration and licensing of agritourism business including tour operators and tour guides.

Private Sector Organisations

Entities like the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG), the Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC), the Private Sector Commission (PSC), and regional Chambers of Commerce can play crucial roles in driving investment and innovation. This might involve:

- Identifying and promoting agritourism investment opportunities.
- Developing and marketing new and innovative agritourism products and experiences.
- Advocating for policies that support the growth of the agritourism sector.
- Providing training and support to their members in areas like marketing, finance, and sustainability.

Community Groups

Local communities, including indigenous communities, would be actively involved in shaping agritourism development in their areas. Identifying and developing agritourism experiences based on their unique natural and cultural assets.

- Establishing and managing community-owned and operated agritourism businesses.
- Ensuring that agritourism benefits are equitably distributed within the community.

10. Creation of an Enabling Environment

The long-term success and sustainability of the National Agritourism Policy and its 10-Year Roadmap rely on robust and diversified funding sources. This section outlines the strategies for securing financial resources and mobilizing investments to support the policy's implementation.

a. Government Initiatives

i. Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

The MoA provides support for agricultural projects, including those related to agritourism. The Agriculture Sector Development Unit (ASDU) within the MoA manages donor-funded projects and can be a valuable resource.

The MoA should provide funding to support agritourism pilot projects, farmer training programs, and infrastructure enhancements.

ii. Investment Incentives

The Guyana Office for Investment outlines various incentives for investors, such as exemptions from customs duties and tax benefits, which can support agritourism ventures.

Other incentives to consider would be to:

- Extend **existing tourism exemptions** to include small-scale, **community-based agritourism** projects.
- Create an "**Agritourism Pioneer Zone**" with tax holidays, accelerated depreciation, and low tariffs on green infrastructure.
- Formalize an online **GRA/GOINVEST portal** offering pre-approved duty/VAT relief for qualifying agritourism imports.
- Align with CARICOM's **Agri-Invest 25by25** and IICA CTA frameworks to facilitate accessing regional grants and technical assistance.

Leveraging these existing tools—duty exemptions, tax credits, infrastructure support, and regional integration—can significantly reduce costs and legal hurdles for agritourism entrepreneurs in Guyana.

iii. Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) 2030

The LCDS 2030 outlines a vision for sustainable development in Guyana, including promoting sustainable tourism and agriculture. It highlights the potential for attracting investment in ecotourism infrastructure and supporting community-based tourism initiatives in the hinterland regions. The LCDS Investment Programme will likely be a key source of funding for agritourism projects that align with the strategy's goals. The LCDS strategy provides funding for sustainable development projects, including agritourism, aimed at reducing carbon emissions and promoting economic growth.

iv. ART-TREES Carbon Market

Guyana is exploring opportunities to integrate its REDD+ Programme with voluntary carbon markets, such as ART-TREES, to generate revenue from its forest climate services. The revenue generated from these markets will be invested in national programmes and community development projects, potentially including agritourism initiatives that support sustainable land use and economic diversification.

v. Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce Industry and Commerce

The Ministry of Tourism Industry and Commerce Industry and Commerce should provide a budget for promotional campaigns and partnerships with local and international tourism operators, to support agritourism events and activities to raise awareness, encourage travel and generate revenue.

b. Interministerial Collaboration

The creation of an enabling environment envisages that every ministry in Guyana allocates funds to invest in regional development, targeting areas such as infrastructure, education, health, agriculture, and tourism. By pooling these resources, ministries can create a collaborative funding mechanism to support agritourism projects that align with their respective mandates. For instance, investments in road networks, utilities, and market access from one ministry could complement training programs, sustainability initiatives, and marketing efforts supported by others. This coordinated approach would maximize the impact of public investments, reduce duplication, and provide comprehensive support to agritourism initiatives, fostering economic growth and community development across the regions. Such collaboration would also ensure that resources are used efficiently to address the unique needs of rural and Hinterland communities, unlocking the full potential of agritourism as a driver of sustainable development.

c. International Organizations and Programs

Organizations such as the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and international NGOs focused on sustainable development and tourism can provide grants and technical assistance.

i. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

IFAD has been instrumental in funding rural development projects in Guyana's hinterland, focusing on income generation and agricultural development. Their ongoing projects aim to improve rural livelihoods and may offer funding avenues for agritourism initiatives.

ii. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The IDB supports sustainable agricultural development programs in Guyana, aiming to increase productivity and promote climate-resilient practices. Their projects often include components that could align with agritourism development.

iii. Guyana-Norway Partnership

The Guyana-Norway Partnership has already provided significant funding for projects related to sustainable development in Guyana, including support for micro and small enterprise development, Amerindian land titling, and ICT access in hinterland communities. While the initial phase of the partnership has concluded, it serves as a model for potential future collaborations that could include funding for agritourism initiatives.

vi. Climate Resilience Funding

Funding from global climate funds could be accessed to integrate sustainable and eco-friendly practices within the agritourism sector.

*d. Private Sector and Investment Opportunities**i. Agri-Investment Forum & Expo*

This event facilitates discussions and showcases investment opportunities in agriculture and food production, providing a platform to connect with potential investors interested in agritourism.

ii. Local Financial Institutions

Banks and credit unions in Guyana may offer loans or grants for agricultural and tourism-related projects. It's advisable to consult with these institutions to explore available funding options.

iii. Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships must be pursued to leverage resources, expertise, and investment from the private sector. These partnerships will be essential for:

1. **Infrastructure Projects:** Collaborations to co-finance road improvements, utilities, and digital connectivity in rural areas to facilitate access to agritourism sites.
2. **Training and Capacity Building:** Joint ventures with private companies, NGOs, and educational institutions to provide specialized training programs.

3. **Marketing and Branding:** Partnering with private firms to develop and execute national and international marketing campaigns that promote Guyana's agritourism sector\
4. **Investment Incentives:** Tax concessions and barrier-free access to the CARICOM market make Guyana an attractive destination for private investors in the agriculture and tourism sectors. By leveraging these funding sources, Guyana can effectively develop its agritourism sector creating sustainable economic opportunities that serve to enhance the county's agritourism offerings.

11. Human Resources

1. **Development of a Skilled Workforce:** The Agritourism product must be authentic yet executed professionally. This requires a workforce with requisite knowledge and skills to deliver world class service as well as access to specialized expertise to achieve policy goals and tap into international markets.
 - **Agricultural Experts:** Knowledgeable in local crops, sustainable farming practices, and innovative agricultural techniques.
 - **Tourism Professionals:** Experienced in hospitality, customer service, and tour coordination and management.
 - **Marketing Specialists:** Skilled in promoting agritourism destinations both locally and internationally.
 - **Culinary Specialist-** provide training to support the development of agritourism by bridging agriculture, gastronomy, and visitor experience.
2. **Continuous Training and Education Opportunities:** The country's explicit investment in agritourism requires that agritourism concepts are embedded in training programmes that are made available to a wide cross-section of participants. Additionally, there is need for basic sensitisation on the opportunities and relevance of agritourism to Guyana's economy and social context.
 - **Workshops and Training Programs:** For farmers and local communities to understand the benefits and practices of agritourism.
 - **Educational Institutions:** Offering courses and degrees in agritourism, sustainable agriculture, and tourism management. Through such institutions such as Carnige School of Home Economics.

3. Fostering Community Involvement: Community endorsement and participation are key ingredients in successful and sustainable agritourism movement. Moreover, community residents are part of the human resource interface for the agritourism experience.

- **Local Engagement:** Encouraging local communities to participate and benefit from agritourism initiatives.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Ensuring that agritourism activities respect and promote local traditions and cultures.

4. Policy Implementation and Regulation Adherence: Policy buy-in is most critical for personnel in key government entities, who must spearhead and affect its roll-out. As such the administrative human resources must be committed to the cause and coordinate the supporting policies and programmes to ensure successful implementation.

- **Government Support:** Policies that support agritourism development, including funding, subsidies, and incentives.
- **Regulatory Framework:** Ensuring safety, quality standards, and environmental protection.

5. Technology Integration: In the present digital age in which we exist, human resource capacity in information technology is important to ensure that the agritourism development is up-to-date and able to reach and meet the needs of the desired target markets.

- **Digital Platforms:** For booking, marketing, and managing agritourism activities.
- **Data Analysis:** Using data to improve services, understand tourist preferences, and optimize operations.

12. Risk Management

To ensure the long-term success and sustainability of Guyana's National Agritourism Policy, proactive risk management and resilience-building measures are essential. This section outlines strategies for anticipating, mitigating, and responding to potential risks while enhancing the resilience of the agritourism sector.

Recognized risks include:

- **Natural Disasters and Climate Change:** The susceptibility of agritourism operations to extreme weather conditions such as floods, hurricanes, and droughts.

- **Economic Volatility:** The potential impact of market fluctuations primarily relates to increased operational costs, such as rising prices for fuel, feed, utilities, and other essential supplies needed for maintaining agritourism activities. These cost increases can reduce profitability and strain resources, particularly for small-scale operators.
- **Policy Implementation Challenges:** Possible resistance to new regulations and coordination issues across governmental and community levels.
- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Delays in the development of necessary infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, and digital connectivity, which may affect accessibility and service delivery at agritourism sites.

Anticipating risks

To mitigate against anticipated risk collaborating with national meteorological services to receive updates on weather patterns and climate risks is necessary. As well as basic economic tracking to stay informed about potential cost increases and supply chain challenges.

Mitigating Risks

In this regard it would be necessary to:

- Develop emergency response plans for agritourism operators, emphasizing essential safety protocols. Introducing targeted subsidies or temporary financial assistance to help operators manage cost spikes due to market volatility
- Prioritise essential infrastructure improvements that directly support access to and functionality of agritourism sites, phased over time.

Responding to Risks

Clear and consistent updates should be provided through existing communication channels, such as local radio, community meetings, and social media. Policy measures should also be flexible to allow policy leaders to make practical adjustments in response to immediate needs, such as expediting support programs or revising regulations to ease operator burdens. Further Local leaders and agritourism operators should be engaged to share resources and best practices during recovery efforts.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system is a cornerstone of the National Agritourism Policy, ensuring that progress is systematically tracked, results are measured, and policy objectives are met. The M&E framework will evaluate the key performance indicators (KPIs) elaborated in section 6.e (Performance Measures/Success Factors) above, and as such inform decision-making.

The M&E system aims to:

- Provide continuous oversight of the policy's implementation and its impacts.
- Enable data-driven adjustments to strategies for improved outcomes.
- Foster accountability and transparency through regular reporting to stakeholders.

Components of the M&E System

Data Collection Framework

A standardized approach should be established for gathering quantitative and qualitative data through surveys, field visits, and digital reporting tools. The data collection framework will be tailored to capture insights at both national and regional levels.

Feedback Mechanisms

Structured feedback channels must be integrated to capture input from agritourism operators, visitors, local communities, and other stakeholders to identify challenges and areas for improvement.

Evaluation and Reporting Processes

Annual Reports

The Inter-Ministerial Agritourism Council should publish comprehensive annual reports that provide insights into the progress made, key achievements, and challenges faced. These reports must be shared with stakeholders, including government bodies, agritourism operators, and community groups.

Mid-Term Reviews

Mid-term evaluations (every three years) must be conducted to assess the policy's impact, analyze trends, and adjust strategic priorities as necessary.

Stakeholder Engagement Forums

Annual forums should be organized to present M&E findings, gather feedback, and discuss policy improvements with stakeholders.

Adaptive Strategy Integration

The M&E system is designed to be adaptive, allowing for:

1. **Responsive Policy Adjustments:** M&E data should be used to inform necessary policy modifications, ensuring that strategies remain relevant and effective.



2. **Capacity Building in M&E:** Regional agritourism committees and operators should be trained on data collection and reporting methods to enhance the consistency and quality of monitoring.

Continuous Improvement and Future Planning

- **Learning from Best Practices:** Regularly benchmark against successful agritourism models in other Caribbean and international contexts to integrate best practices.
- **Technology Integration:** Leverage advancements in technology as possible to automate data collection and reporting processes, facilitating more efficient and accurate tracking.

14. Conclusion

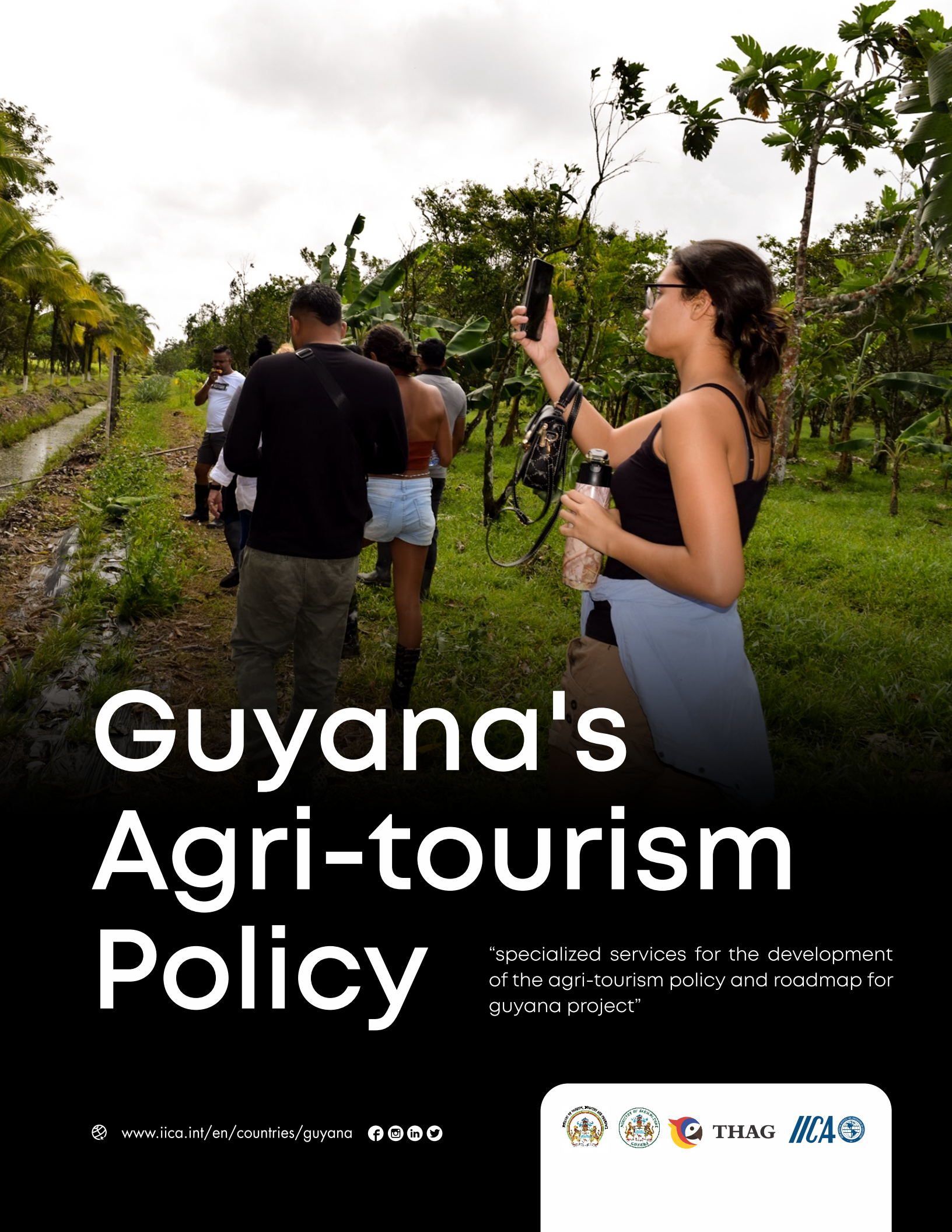
The development of Guyana's Agri-Tourism Policy and Roadmap marks a transformative step toward sustainable economic diversification, food security, and rural empowerment. By strategically linking agriculture and tourism, the policy provides a structured framework to harness the untapped potential of hinterland communities, promote climate-resilient livelihoods, and stimulate inclusive growth.

Agri-tourism offers a unique opportunity to elevate Guyana's agricultural sector by creating new markets for fresh and processed products, enhancing value chains, and fostering cultural preservation. The roadmap's emphasis on climate-smart agriculture, capacity building, and infrastructure development ensures that vulnerable communities are better equipped to withstand environmental shocks and capitalize on increased tourist arrivals.

The participatory approach adopted—through stakeholder consultations, technical working groups, and field assessments—has ensured national ownership and alignment with Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The policy's integration of governance structures, performance metrics, and risk management mechanisms provides a robust foundation for long-term success.

As Guyana continues to experience rapid economic growth, the Agri-Tourism Policy and Roadmap will serve as a catalyst for equitable development, empowering women and youth, enhancing food availability and access, and positioning the country as a regional leader in sustainable agri-tourism. Continuous monitoring, adaptive planning, and strategic investment will be essential to realize the full potential of this initiative and ensure its enduring impact on national food security and economic resilience.





Guyana's Agri-tourism Policy

“specialized services for the development
of the agri-tourism policy and roadmap for
guyana project”



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