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# GUYANA TRADE AND INVESTMENT SUPPORT II

Quarterly Report

March 1, 2010 – May 31, 2010



**May 2010**

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### DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

Cover Photo: GTIS's Agricultural Advisor conducts training on bed preparation at Hauraruni Village

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## List of Common Acronyms

- ADP – Agricultural Diversification Program
- APHIS - Animal and Public Health Information System
- DFID – The United Kingdom Department for International Development
- FPA – Forest Products Association of Guyana
- GFC – Guyana Forestry Commission
- GLAS – Guyana Legality Assurance System
- GoG – Government of Guyana
- GSA – Guyana School of Agriculture
- GTIS – Guyana Trade and Investment Support
- HFFS – Hauraruni Friendly Farmers Society
- IDB – Inter American Development Bank
- IICA – Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura
- LVS – Legality Verification System
- MIF – Multilateral Investment Fund
- New GMC – New Guyana Marketing Corporation
- READ – Rural Enterprise and Agricultural Development
- USAID – United States Agency for International Development
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
- USFS – United States Forest Service

## **Executive Summary**

Guyana's challenge is to competitively offer higher value, differentiated goods and services in international markets, generating more wealth for its people, especially workers and the poor. Now after one year of implementation, USAID/Guyana's Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) II Project has generated strong consensus and momentum around a market-led strategy for promoting investment and exports.

From May 2009 to May 2010, GTIS has succeeded in identifying dynamic external markets in which Guyana has the potential to compete with unique products and services, and has identified the critical bottlenecks in sub-sector value chains that are current constraints to competitiveness. By exhibiting at international trade shows and connecting with investors and buyers, GTIS II and its Guyanese partners have found continuous opportunities to improve and expand sustainable value-added forest products, export-oriented agribusiness, aquaculture, and ecotourism.

The key to this success has been the use of a market-led approach to value chain strengthening, which works with foreign investors, strategic buyers, and "anchor firms" in Guyana to invest in new capacity, technology, and standards, while strengthening overall sub-sectors. Through their interactions with GTIS II, international firms have defined the market demand for Guyanese products and the upgrading required in order to satisfy those needs.

Anchor firms have now begun investing in infrastructure and services to meet demand. Because they offer access to attractive export contracts, the market insights and technical advice provided by these firms is much more effective than any number of consultant reports and workshops. GTIS has used this momentum generated by the private sector to identify further constraints to sustainable growth caused by outdated public policies and is working with Government of Guyana (GoG) counterparts to address them.

Project efforts this quarter have continued this approach with a particular focus on increasing the quality and availability of products available in Guyana ranging from intense biodiversity, to value-added produce, to innovative applications for sustainable wood products. In the wood products sector, the project placed emphasis on increasing understanding of and taking steps to undertake a legality verification system in Guyana. Activities in the aquaculture sub-sector this quarter focused on establishing aquaculture legislation in the country, increasing access to high quality inputs (seed and feed), and continuing to reach out to international buyers and investors to stimulate further industry growth. Project efforts in non-traditional agriculture focused on increasing production from project farms and streamlining export procedures and addressing transport and logistics issues to facilitate the export of this produce in the upcoming winter market. With hotels and resorts booking birding tours years in advance as a result of the GTIS project's birding tourism campaign, project implementation focused on the development of additional ecotourism niches to attract visitors throughout the low tourist season, increase the number of Amerindian and rural beneficiaries, and develop new revenue streams for the entire tourism value chain.

## **Donor Harmonization**

The GTIS II project continues to build its reputation as a critical counterpart for government or donor programs addressing competitiveness issues in Guyana. The project has worked hand-in-hand with these projects and has advocated for cooperation toward common goals. Related activities this quarter are as follows:

### **Cooperation with ADP**

GTIS II continues to work with representatives from the IDB's Agricultural Diversification Programme (ADP). As a result the implementers of ADP are convinced that the best way forward for the program's aquaculture and agriculture components is to build on the momentum generated by GTIS II and to work hand-in-hand on matching goals. GTIS II sub-sector partners will form the majority of the program's working groups and it is likely that GTIS II will have a seat on the technical approval panel.

### **Cooperation with Farmer to Farmer**

GTIS II coordinated with the USAID-funded Partners of Americas Farmer to Farmer program to utilize assistance from a drip irrigation expert from the United States. The volunteer consultant is the former Chief Agronomist for Netafim Irrigation Inc., one of the principle firms responsible for the popularization of drip irrigation in the United States and throughout the world. The consultant analyzed drip irrigation systems in use at Greenfield Farms and Bounty Farm Limited and assisted in oversight of the installation of drip irrigation at Hauraruni Village.

### **Partner Meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture**

GTIS II continues conducting fortnightly meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture's Fisheries Department, the Forest Products Development Marketing Council, the Guyana Forestry Commission, the New Guyana Marketing Corporation, and the Rural Enterprise and Agriculture Development (READ) program. The General Manager of the New GMC briefs the Minister of Agriculture on the topics discussed and recommendations made at the meetings. Principle topics of discussion include steps to streamline export processes for fresh produce and aquaculture products, the establishment of a more accurate database of farmers at New GMC, and pending paperwork from Plant Quarantine owed to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Public Health Information System (APHIS) office for the next revision of the APHIS manual allowing additional target products to be imported from Guyana. Over the last few months, GTIS II has established a concrete procedure with the New GMC to update its database of farmers, and representatives from USDA/APHIS have come to Guyana to conduct an initial assessment to determine the feasibility of updating the APHIS manual to allow melons and papaya from Guyana.

### **Cooperation with the Inter American Development Bank**

GTIS II is continuing to work on proposals to the Inter American Development Bank's (IDB) Multilateral Investment Fund for grants for the development of the aquaculture subsector in Guyana. Counterparts from the IDB/Washington office have informed GTIS II that the aquaculture proposal has been preapproved in the amount of approximately \$750,000. This quarter GTIS continued working with MIF representatives to make the final preparations for the submission of the grant paperwork.

## **Cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture in Israel and MASHAV**

In collaboration with GTIS II, the Israeli Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Shahom Simhom and the Ambassador of Israel to Guyana Amiram Magid invited a delegation consisting of the Minister Agriculture Robert Persaud, Chief Fisheries Officer Vivek Joshi, David Fernandes of Bounty Farm Ltd., and aquaculture stakeholder Chris Lall to tour a host of aquaculture and agriculture sites throughout Israel.

Led by GTIS II's Aquaculture Technical Lead and a member of Shigam Inc., the delegation met with representatives from modern pack houses, aquaculture and agriculture farms, the Yair Research and Development Station, the Nir David Fish Research Station, Carmel Agrexco, Tahal Group, and the MASHAV Center for International Cooperation.

### Carmel Agrexco

Meetings with Carmel Agrexco allowed delegation participants to create a direct linkage with the company and where they discussed the high demand in United States markets for value-added products such as bell peppers and their willingness to work with producers even before they reach large scale exports. This market access is of critical importance to stimulating production expansion. GTIS II will utilize this to encourage rapid growth from partner firms.

### Tahal Group

Minister Persaud met again with representatives from Tahal Group, a company proposing a \$200 million investment in integrated agriculture, aquaculture, and biofuel production in Guyana. Tahal discussed potential sources of finance for the project, emphasizing their willingness to push forward if the Ministry can assure an attractive investment attraction package. In collaboration with Ted Dreyfus at the Office of the



Delegation participants witnessed modern cultivation techniques in agriculture, such as this greenhouse which produces high-value chives using drip irrigation..

President, GTIS II will continue to facilitate this opportunity. This month Tahal is working with the Ministry of Agriculture to write a memorandum of understanding to formalize this agreement.

### MASHAV

At the meetings with the MASHAV Center for International Cooperation and the Israeli Minister of Agriculture participants discussed a possible bilateral agreement between Israel and Guyana for the development of agriculture and aquaculture in the country. Ambassador Amiram Magid agreed to form a team with officials from both countries to determine the scope of such an agreement. In May the Minister of Agriculture of Guyana responded to initial discussions of this bilateral agreement between the two countries. In a letter to the Ambassador of Israel to Guyana he recommended the following for continued sector development:

1. Establish a center for Israeli agricultural technology demonstration, especially in irrigation and fertilization. This center would serve as a “demonstration facility” and a local and regional small-business initiative and entrepreneurship focal point.

2. Continue short-term consultancies through MASHAV which will fill an immediate need in the following areas:
  - a. International standards for export employed at agriculture and aquaculture packaging houses
  - b. Construction of greenhouse and drip irrigation technology
  - c. Design assistance for fresh produce warehouse near the Timehri international airport
3. Establish an ongoing MASHAV training program with Guyana in both agriculture and aquaculture that will cover all aspects of grow-out from seeds and fingerlings to post-harvesting. Possible areas include:
  - a. General Training in:
    - i. Agriculture farm management and implementation of international standards
    - ii. Participatory extension approach for technology transfer
  - b. Aquaculture Training in:
    - i. Inland aquaculture
    - ii. Aquaculture farm management
    - iii. Fish health for veterinarians
  - c. Agriculture Training in:
    - i. Fruits and vegetables operation management
    - ii. Post harvest handling and technology for fresh produce
    - iii. Fertilization and irrigation applications

## **Wood Products**

Efforts in the wood products sector this quarter focused on increasing understanding of and taking steps to undertake a legality verification system in Guyana. This initiative is expected to increase the GoG's understanding of the benefits of establishing internationally recognized sustainable forestry standards, and the steps necessary to achieve this goal. The project also continued to aid in the marketing of sustainable value-added wood products for export.

### **The Path to Legality Verification**

This quarter the GTIS II team participated in a series of meetings to increase understanding of the importance of establishing an internationally recognized legality verification system. The GoG is working with documents created by ProForest in collaboration with the GTIS I program. These documents include an audit of the Guyana's timber harvesting legislation, practices, and enforcement and provide recommendations on the necessary steps for compliance with international legality verification standards at the time (early 2008). The Guyana National Bureau of Standards is now charged with using the ProForest documents to create the Guyana Legality Assurance System (GLAS).

### **Participation in the International Wood Products Association Annual Conference**

The GTIS II team accompanied a delegation of 8 private sector stakeholders from Forest Products Association of Guyana, the Guyana Manufacturers and Services Association, Toolsie Persaud, Guyana Timber Products, Durable Hardwoods, Guiana Shield Forestry Resources, Bulkan Timber Works Inc., Sustainable Forest Inc., Superior Shingles and Wood Products Inc.,

and Roopan Ramotar Investments to the International Wood Products Association (IWPA) World of Wood Conference in Miami.

The Guyana delegation had a dedicated table at the conference where the group displayed the organizations' various brochures and product samples, and Mr. Khalawan, the Senior Vice President of the FPA, gave a special presentation on Guyana's wood sector that highlighted various species and provided a brief overview of export figures, prices, logistics, and the products being offered by the respective companies of the attendees representing Guyana at the IWPA.

On April 29, at the annual presentation of the IWPA Awards of Excellence, Durable Wood Products ([www.durablewoods.com](http://www.durablewoods.com)) was honored with the IWPA Innovative Excellence award for their Turada Wallaba shingles. Cedar and other wood shingles need to be treated with chemicals to make them more resistant to fire, insects, and decay, but the Turada Wallaba Shingles manufactured in Guyana need no chemical enhancement, making them a more environmentally friendly product.

After the show, GTIS II lead site visits to local wood processing companies Hollywood Wood Works and Federal Mill Works. The delegation witnessed modern processing facilities including a number of relatively inexpensive upgrades that would allow local processors to increase the quality and value of their products. The processing facilities also shared their lists of distributors with the delegation. GTIS II will continue to work with participants to assist in reach out to these additional potential buyers.

## **Planned Activities**

### **Legality Verification with Tropical Forest Trust**

While, members from GFC, FPDMC, FPA, and the private sector are charged with reviewing the draft GLAS created by the Guyana National Bureau of Standards, these requirements have changed since ProForest provided feedback in early 2008. GTIS II will continue discussions with Tropical Forest Trust – an organization currently working with project partner Toolsie Persaud on firm-level legality verification – in order to organize a consultancy with the Guyana Bureau of Standards, work directly with its staff to teach the changes in international requirements for certification and review the proposed draft standards.

### **Compliance with the Lacey Act**

GTIS II is currently in negotiations with an expert to educate and advise industry partners on the implications and compliance requirements of the latest version of the Lacey Act. The Lacey Act is the United States' oldest national wildlife protection statute and serves as an anti-trafficking statute protecting a broad range of wildlife and wild plants. A recent amendment applies the enforcement of this act to all international traffickers of plants, including timber or associated wood products<sup>1</sup>.

This Lacey Act expert is also a importer of tropical hardwoods and will be able to provide information on the Lacey Act from first a compliance point of view (what is the minimum information that would need to be provided) and then second, from a buyer's point of view in

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<sup>1</sup> *New Lacey Act Provisions Covering Illegal Timber.* [www.fs.fed.us/.../Lacey Act amendments public summary.doc](http://www.fs.fed.us/.../Lacey_Act_amendments_public_summary.doc)

terms of what would make an international buyer feel comfortable regarding purchases from Guyana.

## **Aquaculture**

Activities in the aquaculture sub-sector this quarter focused on establishing aquaculture legislation in the country, increasing access to high quality inputs (seed and feed), and continuing to reach out to international buyers and investors to stimulate further industry growth.

### **Aquaculture Legislation**

Guyana's nascent aquaculture industry suffers from a lack of appropriate legislation governing aquaculture practices. In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the ADP project, GTIS II discovered previously unknown draft legislation for post harvest handling of fishery products and drafted legislation for aquaculture best practices. This legislation is currently under review by the Minister of Agriculture and the Ministry's lawyer before it is submitted to Parliament. If approved, this legislation will be a major breakthrough for governance of the industry and a catalyst for growth.

### **Developing Inputs**

The GTIS II staff continues to provide technical assistance to the supermale hatchery at Maharaja Oil Mills. Thanks to a donation of 1,700 breeding sets of supermale tilapia from DFID, the hatchery is now producing all-male brood stock for local farmers, a key input to globally competitive tilapia production. This brood stock has the potential to produce approximately \$65 million dollars in aquaculture sales and create up to 1,700 new jobs. The project facilitated the arrival of the second batch of 300 sets of supermales from Fishgen. These fish will join the first batch of 300 at the Maharaja Oil Mill Fish Hatchery which will produce millions of male fingerlings for the growing industry. The hatchery has received its first long-term order to supply a batch of up to 720,000 male fingerlings to supply a NAAG farmer in Onverwagt and is supplying numerous small-scale farmers in the country.

To address the issue of providing low cost, internationally competitive feed to producers, the Minister of Agriculture recently announced that the GoG will be working with a local firm Didco to upgrade its feed processing facilities for production of extruded aquaculture feed. While the details of this agreement are not yet public knowledge, GTIS II will continue to collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture to determine the most effective way of working together on this initiative.

### **Engineered Farm Designs and Feasibility Studies**

The project invited an Aquaculture Engineer to provide technical assistance to aid in the startup of leading partner farms. Working together with GTIS II's Aquaculture Technical Lead, the consultant has provided each farm with a feasibility study, an engineered farm design, and equipment list with all the necessary inputs for project startup. These critical inputs will allow partner firms to expand into larger-scale commercial production for export to markets in the North America and the Caribbean.

### **Marketing and Investment Attraction**

GTIS II's Aquaculture Technical Lead attended the European Seafood Exposition in Brussels, Belgium. This international trade show is the largest seafood fair in the world and allowed GTIS to network with industry stakeholders and follow up on existing leads. GTIS conducted meetings with Tropical Aquaculture AquaChile, and Gradient Aquaculture at the show where



the Aquaculture Technical Lead presented the current situation of the development of the sub-sector and the desire by the government to attract foreign investors. GTIS is presently following up on those meetings and when appropriate will make arrangements for buyer visits.

## **Planned Activities**

### **Investment Attraction**

The project has invited one of the shareholders in Rainforest Aquaculture, one of the largest tilapia producers in Costa Rica, to tour Guyana in order to meet the major producers, explore the investment climate, and look for opportunities to market Guyanese aquaculture to his network of buyers in the United States and the Caribbean.

### **Agribusiness**

Project efforts focused on increasing production from project farms and streamlining export procedures and addressing transport and logistics issues to facilitate the export of this produce in the upcoming winter market.

### **Transport and Logistics for Initial Sales**

GTIS II and project partner Shigam Inc. have identified markets in Antigua and Martinique for fresh pineapple and passion fruit and have made 16 such air shipments ranging between 1,000 to 2,000 lbs each. Within the next few months the project expects to increase volumes to 20 ft container loads. Project partner Greenfield Farms has identified a market and buyer for 1,000 lbs per week of fresh papaya and 1,000 lbs of fresh melons per week for export to Barbados. The firm has consistently filled these export orders during this quarter. These steady volumes will provide freight companies with the evidence they need to lower costs to competitive ranges for farmers. GTIS celebrated its first victory in this area when the project team negotiated a 25% reduction in the cost of air freight from Guyana to Antigua, one of the principle markets in the Caribbean for fresh produce.

### **Establishment of a Demonstration Community for Contract Farming**

The Hauraruni Friendly Farmers Society (HFFS) has contacted GTIS II with plans for a five acre operation that will produce butternut squash and papaya for export. The Friendly Farmers Society has benefitted from technical assistance from IICA in hydroponics cultivation and has enthusiastically expressed its interest in integrating open field drip irrigation technologies. Located on the sandy soil of the Linden Highway, this project could prove to be a successful demonstration model for neighboring farmers interested in seeing the benefits of sandy soil cultivation. The GTIS program has signed a memorandum of understanding with the community for the cultivation of five acres of butternut squash and two acres of papaya.

GTIS II will provide technical assistance to HFFS in production and farm management best practices in compliance with GlobalGAP standards. Shigam Inc. will also be under contractual agreement to purchase all export quality produce from the community. GTIS will use the partnership with HFFS to show Guyana's farmers the benefits of contract farming and gauge the effort required to set up such a system before implementing it on a larger scale in Guyana. This quarter the community has cleared 5 acres for production and the project has both begun land preparation training and facilitated the installation of drip irrigation infrastructure.

## **Demonstration of Modern Farming Techniques**

Project partner Greenfield Farms hosted a group of 50 students from the Guyana School of Agriculture. The students learned about modern production techniques using drip irrigation and greenhouse technologies. Students responded enthusiastically to the tour, many commenting that they had never seen such tools. Introducing such cultivation techniques to students is an important step to ensure that an adequate work force is developed for the widespread development of the sector.

The President of Jamaica Drip Irrigation came to Guyana to conduct a presentation on the application and benefits of drip irrigation. GTIS II organized a venue for the presentation at the Guyana School of Agriculture where over 150 farmers, entrepreneurs, students, and government officials learned about the benefits of drip irrigation in Guyana's growing conditions. The Minister of Agriculture Robert Persaud expressed his gratitude for the presentation emphasizing that all farmers should look more seriously at implementing drip irrigation to reduce water usage and chemical runoffs.



At a workshop on drip irrigation hosted by GTIS and Jamaica Drip Irrigation the Minister of Agriculture Robert Persaud emphasizes that farmers should look seriously at implementing these technologies

## **Planned Activities**

### **Long-term Technical Assistance**

With a number of new farms coming online in Year 2, the GTIS II project predicts that there will be a great need for an experienced long-term farm manager to work hand-in-hand with these firms to teach production best practices, assure quality control, and train the first generation of extension officers in modern farming methods. This expert would work directly with project beneficiary farm managers, teaching them such production best practices. This expert would also tailor protocols for best practices to the environment in Guyana, assuring that counterparts are fully engaged in every aspect of running a farm. GTIS will review potential candidates for a long-term technical lead for its agriculture team with USAID and discuss a viable timeline for mobilization.

## **Ecotourism**

With hotels and resorts booking birding tours years in advance, as a result of the GTIS project's birding tourism campaign, project implementation focused on the development of additional ecotourism niches to attract visitors throughout the low tourist season, increase the number of Amerindian and rural beneficiaries, and develop new revenue streams for the entire tourism value chain.

### **Familiarization Tour**

Utilizing contacts and information gained at such trade shows, the project organized a familiarization tour to Guyana so that international tour operators, representatives from global

media, and other key partners could witness the country's wealth of biodiversity and unspoiled beauty firsthand. Participants included the editor of Bird Watcher's Digest, the Director of International Sustainable Conservation for the American Birding Convention, the coordinator of the San Diego Bird Festival, the originator and co-organizer of the British Birdwatching Fair, and several birding and nature travel tour companies. Participants inspected local tourism facilities and advised firms on the required changes they had to make in order to host international tour groups. Feedback from the tour confirmed that guides and lodges were well equipped to handle birding tours but would need some additional investments and training in order to compete with other such international destinations.

### **Sub-sector Strategy Meetings**

The GTIS II team conducted strategy meetings with industry sector stakeholders in Georgetown and the interior to discuss the next steps for development of the sub-sector. Additional niches such as general ecotourism and research tourism in particular will allow lodges to attract visitors during the less popular rainy season. Participants provided feedback on past GTIS II assistance and set priorities for next year's activities with the project. Participants also expressed their gratitude for the accomplishments up to this point with the GTIS II project and their enthusiasm for expanding markets to include additional tourism niches.

### **Documentary on Guyana**

Robert Arrington, the former host of the sport fishing show Reel Adventures is now represented by one of the largest agencies in the outdoor industry with opportunities for filming Animal Planet episodes featuring Guyana. Mr. Arrington has also secured a deal with [www.costadelmar.com](http://www.costadelmar.com), to produce a film on how Rewa Village has moved to and adopted a conservation and sustainable tourism approach for their community. The story of Surama as the community leader overall in the Rupununi and their role in influencing Rewa will also be the supporting theme featured. Costa Del Mar's film company, Costa Films, produces films that raise awareness about conservation issues around the world. In recent years, the company has produced films in the Galapagos, Florida, Belize, Alaska, and Panama, combining fishing adventure, local culture, and conservation. This month GTIS II facilitated a reconnaissance trip for the Costa del Mar team before they begin filming in August.



The GTIS tourism initiative has been helping to develop Guyana's tourism industry, including by sponsoring guide training programs for locals. Here, local guides Ron Allicock and Luke Johnson use their skills to find the rare Harpy Eagle. Both guides are success stories for Guyana, as they are now leading groups of visitors for international tour operators and passing on their skills to other locals to help protect Guyana's biodiversity.

### **Leveraged Guide Training**

As a result of GTIS II's work in the ecotourism sub-sector, local guide Eggbert Fredericks has been invited to participate in the American Birding Association's-Mass Audubon birding guide training program. Eggbert has worked at the Iwokrama International Centre ([www.iwokrama.org](http://www.iwokrama.org)) as a naturalist interpreter and tour guide for two years and has also worked as a tour guide for Maipaima Ecolodge in the village of Nappi for one year. He will spend a month at Massachusetts Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center on Plum Island Turnpike as part of Mass. Audubon's International Intern Program, the same program in which local guide Ron Allicock participated.

## **Leveraged Media Coverage**

Guyana is off to a great start for media coverage this quarter. In the UK, The Observer asked several *Travel Gurus* to name their hotspots for 2010. Explorer and TV presenter Benedict Allen named Guyana, saying, "I am hoping to reach the remotest jungle on the planet, which seems to be in southern Guyana. Here, jaguars roam without fear of man, and there are lengthy anacondas and other great beauties and beasts." Read the entire article here: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/2010/jan/03/travel-gurus-2010-guide?page=2>.

In March, *Condé Nast Traveler* ran an excellent article on Guyana called, "Avatar on Earth" (<http://www.concierge.com/cntraveler/articles/502351?pageNumber=1>). The author uses his experience at a jungle survival course near Surama village to tell of Guyana's plans to make live trees more valuable than dead ones.

Also in March, *The National*

(<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100313/TRAVEL/100319959/1087/LIFE>) newspaper ran a story about the English-speaking country "[p]erched on the shoulder of South America like a gaudy parrot." That was followed by an important piece on Mongabay.com ([http://news.mongabay.com/2010/0228-hance\\_giants.html](http://news.mongabay.com/2010/0228-hance_giants.html)) about the decision of the Guyana government to ban gold mining in the 'Land of the Giants' – the Rewa Head.

In April, Guyana's birds were the stars of an article in *Winging It: The Official Newsletter of the American Birding Association*

([http://www.guyanabirds.com/UserFiles/File/News%20Articles/Guyana%20ABA%20article%20by%20Rick%20Wright\\_April2010.pdf](http://www.guyanabirds.com/UserFiles/File/News%20Articles/Guyana%20ABA%20article%20by%20Rick%20Wright_April2010.pdf)). In the piece, Rick Wright states: "Just why international ornitho-tourism should for so long have passed Guyana by is a mystery."

Look for a Guyana feature in the July/August 2010 issue of *Bird Watcher's Digest* (written by Julie Zickefoose, whose [blog](#) always deserves a visit, but in the meantime interested readers can visit Bill Thompson's [blog](#) (he's the magazine's editor) to read his ongoing posts about his recent familiarization trip to Guyana.

## **Planned Activities**

### **Product Development**

GTIS II will work with partners to implement additional improvements to destinations based on the feedback received from the most recent familiarization tours. This includes additional hospitality awareness, further upgrading of accommodations, and encouraging investment in additional vehicles for transportation between lodges.

### **Continued Participation in the British Birdwatching Fair**

The project will exhibit at the 2009 British Birdwatching Fair (BBWF). The BBWF is the largest show of its kind in the world. The attending participants will build upon Guyana's reputation as the hot new birding destination at this year's show, fostering market linkages with sector stakeholders and exploring opportunities to increase Guyana's footprint in the birding and ecotourism sub-sectors. Building on the success of last year's promotional event for Guyana in London, the GTIS team will also support a similar promotional event