

Guyana energy storage policy updates

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

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

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

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

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

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

On biodiversity protection and water management, significant work has been undertaken to enable the doubling of Guyana's protected area system in 2025, the establishment of an International Centre for

Biodiversity, protection and restoration of critical ecosystems, expansion of Guyana's offering for nature-based solutions beyond carbon, and advancing Guyana's progress towards the global target of conserving at least 30% of the planet's lands and oceans by 2030.

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

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

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

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

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

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