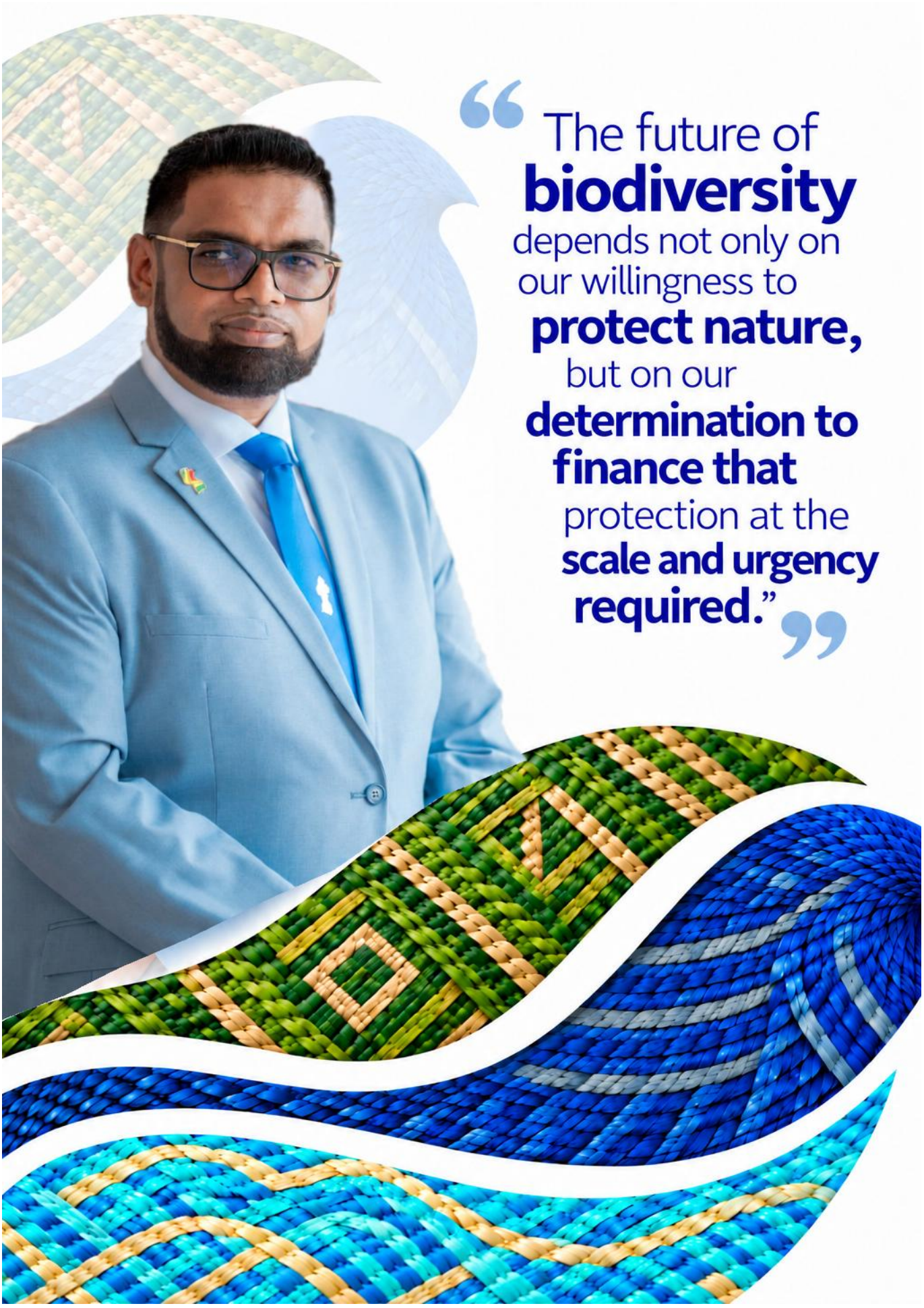
AGENDA 2026

Investing in Nature

Accelerating Biodiversity Finance for Sustainable Development

GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ALLIANCE

SECOND CONFERENCE
30 – 31 OCTOBER 2026
ARTHUR CHUNG CONFERENCE CENTRE
GEORGETOWN, GUYANA


“The future of biodiversity depends not only on our willingness to protect nature, but on our determination to finance that protection at the scale and urgency required.”

GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ALLIANCE CONFERENCE:
"INVESTING IN NATURE: ACCELERATING BIODIVERSITY FINANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"

Arthur Chung Conference Centre
Liliendaal, Georgetown, Guyana
October 30-31, 2026

Overview

The Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference is being held under the theme ***"Investing in Nature: Accelerating Biodiversity Finance for Sustainable Development."*** Building on the GBA Summit 2025, this year's Conference will bring together political leaders, governments, financial institutions, development partners, private sector actors, researchers, civil society, and communities. Over the two days, the programme will provide a high-level platform for dialogue, partnership-building, exhibitions, and practical discussions aimed at mobilising finance, strengthening cooperation, and advancing scalable solutions for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Day One. Setting the Vision: Leadership, Ambition and Global Cooperation for Biodiversity

Day One will serve as the high-level opening of the Global Biodiversity Alliance Conference. The programme will connect the interactive exhibition, youth and women in conservation engagement, and leader-level plenary discussions to the broader theme of investing in nature and accelerating biodiversity finance for sustainable development. It will set the strategic vision for the Alliance by bringing together political leaders, governments, international organisations, financial institutions, private sector actors, Indigenous representatives, youth, women, researchers and civil society to reflect on the state of global biodiversity finance, trends, priorities and opportunities and the role of biodiversity as a pillar of economic growth.

Day Two. Mobilising Action: Finance for Nature through Partnerships and Innovation

Day Two will move from strategic vision to practical delivery, focusing on how biodiversity finance can be mobilised and implemented at scale. Sessions will examine the global finance architecture, innovative instruments and delivery models, country readiness, institutional capacity and partnerships across governments, development banks, philanthropy and the private sector. A dedicated deep dive into biodiversity information systems will explore how credible data, technology, community-based monitoring and national platforms can strengthen conservation planning, investment readiness and accountability. The day will conclude by identifying priorities for country-led action, stronger partnerships and scalable financing solutions.

GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY ALLIANCE

Our Mission. Protect Nature. Restore Balance. Secure Our Future.

Friday, October 30, 2026: Setting the Vision –Leadership, Ambition and Global Cooperation for Biodiversity
Arthur Chung Conference Centre: Dome (Main Hall)

Time (hrs)	Topic	Description	Chairpersons & Speakers
08.30 -09.00	PARTICIPANTS ASSEMBLE IN THE DOME		
09.00 – 11.00	GBA Opening Ceremony	Chairperson: Ms. Kiana Wilburg	
		CULTURAL PRESENTATION	
		SHORT INTRODUCTORY VIDEO	
		Remarks	**H.E. Mr. José Manuel Restrepo Abondano.** Vice President of the Republic of Colombia.
		Feature Address: Guyana's Vision for Closing the Global Biodiversity Finance Gap	**H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana**
		ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW MEMBERS	
		END OF OFFICIAL OPENING	
	Sports for Nature	Launch of Desert Vipers Sustainability & Biodiversity Awareness Kit	Desert Vipers Ambassador: Shimron Hetmyer
	BREAK & FAMILY PHOTO		
11.00 – 12.00	Land of Many Futures	Chairperson: Ms. Fareeza Haniff	
		Conservation Perspectives	Protected Areas Commission Moderator: Ms. Michella Abraham-Ali
PARTICIPANTS TRANSITION TO THE EXHIBITION SPACE IN THE AUDITORIUM			
12.30 – 13.30	Exhibition Tour	GBA Exhibition organised across the 6 priorities of the 2030 Action Plan.	**Led by H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali,** President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and **Hon. Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo,** Vice President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.
PARTICIPANTS TRANSITION TO THE DOME (MAIN HALL) FOR THE PLENARY SESSION			
13.30 -15.30	**State of Biodiversity Finance**	Chairperson: Rt Hon. David Lammy, MP	
		The Guyana Story: Creating a Model for the World	**Hon. Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo**, Vice President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.
		High-Level Plenary: Official Statements and National Perspectives	**<u>Official State & Government Representatives</u>**: 1. **Hon. María José Pinto**, Vice President of the Republic of Ecuador. (*recorded message)* 2. **Hon. Michael Halkitis**, Minister of Finance, Commonwealth of the Bahamas 3. **Hon. Marsha Caddle**, Minister of Economic Affairs & Planning, Barbados 4. **H.E. Mr. Juan Carlos Navarro**, Minister of Environment, Panama 5. **H.E. Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye**, Minister of Environment, Republic of Rwanda 6. **H.E Stanley L. Soeropawiro,** Minister of Land and Forest Management, Republic of Suriname

			Senior & High-Level Officials: 1. **H.E Iván Duque Márquez**, Former President of the Republic of Colombia 2. **Ms. Maggie Charnley,** Head, International Forest Unit. United Kingdom.
			Organizations: 1. **H.E. Ban Ki-moon.** President of the Assembly and Chair of the Council, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) (*recorded message)* 2. **Ms. Katy Thompson,** Acting Resident Coordinator, RCO, UN Guyana 3. **Senator Russ Feingold**, Honorary Ambassador, Campaign for Nature (CfN) (*Former U.S. Senator from Wisconsin)* 4. **Dr. James C. Deutsch**, Chief Executive Officer, Rainforest Trust 5. **Ms. Valerie Hickey,** Director, Environment, World Bank Group 6. **Dr. Gonzalo Castro de la Mata,** Executive Director, EARTHNA *Center for a Sustainable Future*
15.30-15.45	SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING		
Enabling Access to Biodiversity Finance: Country Readiness, Institutions and Implementation			
15.45 – 16.45	This session will examine the country-level foundations required to generate and implement credible, investable biodiversity opportunities: institutional readiness, governance and coordination, implementation capacity, project preparation, pipeline development, and local and community partnerships. The focus is on countries' capacity to receive and deploy finance effectively—not on mobilising capital, blending finance or structuring transactions. **Mr. Enrique Ortiz:** *Highlighting lessons from the Amazon region on translating biodiversity outcomes into financeable opportunities through locally driven solutions, effective governance and long-term conservation financing models, including how grant support, early-stage testing and implementation partnerships can strengthen project preparation and the development of credible nature-positive pipelines.* **Mr. Damian Fernandes:** *Presenting lessons from Guyana on building the institutional foundations for biodiversity finance, including protected area management, community partnerships, conservation outcomes, and the development of investable nature-positive initiatives and how these inform future financing options.* **Dr. Daniela Raik:** *Providing a global implementation perspective on the institutional partnerships, local delivery*		**Moderator: Rt Hon. David Lammy, MP** **Panelists:** 1. **Mr. Enrique Ortiz**, Senior Programme Director, Andes Amazon Fund 2. **Mr. Damian Fernandes**, Protected Areas Commission 3. **Dr. Daniela Raik**, President and Chief Conservation Officer, Conservation International 4. **Ms. Emma Benameur,** Director – Leadership & Learning, Vilars Institute 5. **H.E. Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye**, Minister of Environment, Republic of Rwanda 6. **Mr. Anton Edmunds**, General Manager, Caribbean Country Department, IDB

	systems and community-centred approaches required to develop, manage and implement credible biodiversity programmes, and to strengthen country readiness for financing at scale. **Ms. Emma Benameur***: Providing a systems leadership and investment-readiness perspective on the capacity-building, cross-sector collaboration and partnership mechanisms required to strengthen organisations, develop credible delivery models, and prepare nature-positive solutions for national and international financing opportunities.* **H.E. Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye:** *Sharing Rwanda's country-level perspective on aligning environmental policy, institutional coordination and implementation capacity to build a credible biodiversity investment pipeline, including the role of government leadership, community participation and partnerships in translating national priorities into scalable programmes.* **Mr. Anton Edmunds:** *Providing a Caribbean development-finance perspective on the institutional, technical and project-preparation support countries need to convert biodiversity priorities into implementable programmes, strengthen pipelines and delivery systems, and access financing through coordinated regional and international partnerships.*	
17.00 – 17.10	CLOSE	Rt Hon. David Lammy, MP

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Saturday October 31, 2026: Mobilising Action – Finance for Nature through Partnerships and Innovation

Arthur Chung Conference Centre – Dome (Main Hall)

Time (hrs)	Topic	Description	Chairperson & Speakers
08.00-09.00	COFFEE & NETWORKING IN FOYER. DELEGATES SEATED IN DOME BY 08.45		
09.00-09.30	WELCOME		Chairperson: Ms. Kiana Wilburg
	Reimagining the Global Biodiversity Finance Architecture for the 21st Century	A vision-setting address outlining the principles and ambition for a future global biodiversity finance architecture that better rewards conservation and supports sustainable development.	**H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali** President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana
SHORT VIDEO: ADVANCING 30 X 2030			
09.30 – 11:00	**Biodiversity as an Economic Asset: Policy, Fiscal and Institutional Leadership**		
	This session will examine the economic and policy-enabling environment needed to position biodiversity as an asset for sustainable growth. Panelists will focus on integrating biodiversity into national development strategies, fiscal policy, public investment and economic planning; clarifying institutional mandates and coordination; strengthening policy and regulatory signals; and defining the roles of finance ministries, development banks and domestic banks. The discussion will address the reforms that create confidence and an enabling environment for investment, rather than the design of individual instruments or transactions. **Hon. Senior Minister Dr. Ashni Singh: National economic framing and moderation:** *Frame biodiversity as a national economic and development priority; connect natural capital to fiscal strategy, public investment and inter-ministerial coordination; and guide the panel toward a practical set of enabling reforms.* **Hon. Michael Halkitis: Fiscal policy and public-finance leadership for island economies:** *Outline how finance ministries can integrate biodiversity and natural-capital priorities into fiscal planning, budgeting and public investment, while using incentives and inter-agency coordination to strengthen resilience and create a credible enabling environment for nature-positive economic activity.* **Hon. Marsha Caddle: Economic planning and cross-government implementation:** *Explain how biodiversity can be embedded in national development planning, sector strategies and public-investment priorities, with clear institutional mandates, coordinated implementation and policy signals that connect conservation outcomes to inclusive growth and long-term economic resilience.* **Ms. Valerie Hickey: National policy and development-finance alignment:** *Explain how national policy, public expenditure and development-bank engagement can embed biodiversity in economic planning and strengthen the enabling environment.* **Mr. Shawn Gurcharran: Domestic banking conditions:** *Set out policy*	**Moderator**: **Hon. Senior Minister Dr. Ashni Singh**, Senior Minister within the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance, Guyana **Panelists:** 1. **Hon. Michael Halkitis**, Minister of Finance, Commonwealth of the Bahamas 2. **Hon. Marsha Caddle**, Minister of Economic Affairs & Planning, Barbados 3. **Ms. Valerie Hickey**, Director, Environment, World Bank Group 4. **Mr. Shawn N. Gurcharran**, Chief Executive Officer, GBTI 5. **Mr. Carlos Cordova**, Director, Relationship Management, Environmental Solutions, Commercial Strategy, S&P Global 6. **Mr. Oliver Withers,** Head, Nature Finance, Standard Chartered - commercial requirements and private-capital mobilisation.

	clarity, incentives, information and prudential conditions domestic banks need to recognise nature-related opportunities and participate responsibly. **Mr. Carlos Cordova: Policy signals and market information:** *Describe how consistent policy signals, classifications and decision-useful market information can improve comparability and institutional confidence, without moving into transaction structuring.* **Mr. Oliver Withers: Commercial requirements and private-capital mobilisation:** *Set out the policy certainty, investable cash flows, risk allocation, scale, tenor, governance, safeguards and reporting standards that commercial financiers need to recognise nature-related opportunities and mobilise private capital responsibly, while keeping the discussion focused on the enabling environment rather than individual transaction design.*	
11:00 –13.00	**NBIS in Action: A Deep Dive into Biodiversity Information Systems for Conservation and Finance** Effective conservation and biodiversity finance depend on credible, accessible and decision-ready information. Using Guyana's emerging National Biodiversity Information System (NBIS) as a practical case study, this session will examine how policy, governance, scientific and community data, technology, quality assurance and interoperability can be brought together in a trusted national platform that supports conservation planning, reporting, transparency and future financing decisions. Two framing presentations will establish practical lessons for NBIS. The framing presenters will then depart the stage, and the moderator will convene a separate panel for short interventions and a focused discussion. **Ms. Nasheta Dewnath:** *A short presentation on institutional arrangements, remote sensing, GIS, field verification, data management, quality assurance and reporting, with practical lessons for interoperability, agency roles, sustained capacity, transparent standards and phased implementation.* **Mr. Duval Llaguno:** *A short presentation drawing on IDB Lab's experience supporting innovation across Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting practical lessons on moving biodiversity data platforms from pilot initiatives to scalable national infrastructure.* **Short interventions:** **H.E. Stanley L. Soeropawiro: Ministerial leadership, forest information and national decision-making:** *Share Suriname's perspective on how land and forest information can support ministerial decisions, sustainable forest management and national biodiversity priorities; highlight the value of coordination among land, forest and environmental institutions.* **Mr. Kemraj Parsram: Policy mandate, governance and institutional accountability:** *Set out how NBIS should support environmental policy, permitting and national reporting, and clarify the governance*	**Moderator: Dr. Priya Maharaj**, Director, Centre for the Study of Biological Diversity **Framing presenters:** 1. **Ms. Nasheta Dewnath**, Programme Coordinator, Guyana Forestry Commission. Lessons from MRVS for NBIS. 2. **Mr. Duval Llaguno**, Sector Lead Specialist at the IDB. Innovation, investment readiness and scaling biodiversity information systems **Panelists (short interventions followed by discussion):** 1. **H.E Stanley L. Soeropawiro,** Minister of Land and Forest Management, Republic of Suriname 2. **Mr. Kemraj Parsram,** Executive Director, EPA. 3. **Dr. Alex Killion**, Managing Director, Yale Center for Biodiversity and Global Change 4. **Mr. Leroy Ignacio**, President, SRCS 5. **Mr. Juan Bello**, Regional Director and Representative. UNEP Latin America & Caribbean Office

	arrangements, institutional mandates, data stewardship responsibilities and accountability mechanisms required for a trusted national system. **Dr. Alex Killion: System architecture, integration, analytics and emerging technology:** *Highlight the technical and scientific design choices needed to integrate satellite, scientific, site-level and community data; support interoperability and quality assurance; and provide useful analytics and decision-ready products for different users.* **Mr. Leroy Ignacio: Community-led monitoring, Indigenous knowledge, consent and reciprocal value:** *Address how Indigenous and local knowledge can be incorporated through free, prior and informed consent, community data governance, capacity-building, benefit-sharing and meaningful feedback, so communities are recognised as partners and users of the system rather than only data collectors.* **Mr. Juan Bello: Regional cooperation, international standards and broader application:** *Offer a UNEP Latin America and Caribbean perspective on aligning NBIS with international biodiversity commitments and interoperable standards, strengthening cooperation across institutions and countries, and identifying lessons from Guyana that could inform biodiversity information systems elsewhere in the region and across the Global Biodiversity Alliance.*	
13.00 – 15.00	**Financing Nature at Scale: Mobilising Capital, Instruments and Delivery Partnerships** This session will move from policy and country readiness to financing execution, showing how public, private, philanthropic and development capital can be combined to scale prepared biodiversity opportunities. **Mr. Carlos Cordova: Market framing and moderation:** *Guide the discussion from prepared opportunities to practical financing pathways, drawing out instrument choice, risk allocation, market information and delivery partnerships.* **H.E. Iván Duque Márquez: Strategic ambition:** *Set the political and investment case for moving credible biodiversity pipelines to scale through coordinated public, private, philanthropic and development capital.* **Dr. Maya Takagi: Agrifood systems and catalytic instruments:** *Show how sequenced grants, concessional finance, guarantees and results-based funding can advance biodiversity, food security and resilient livelihoods.* **H.E. Mr. Juan Carlos Navarro: Country application:** *Explain how government can align policy, institutions and financing instruments to deliver national biodiversity priorities.* **Mr. Padu Franco: Catalytic philanthropy:** *Describe how flexible and risk-tolerant philanthropy can fund early stages, strengthen blended structures and crowd in other capital.*	**Moderator: Mr. Carlos Cordova**, Director, Relationship Management, Environmental Solutions, Commercial Strategy, S&P Global **Strategic Framing Presenter:** **H.E. Iván Duque Márquez**, Former President of the Republic of Colombia. **Technical Framing Presenter:** **Dr. Maya Takagi**, Deputy Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO. **Panelists:** 1. **H.E. Mr. Juan Carlos Navarro**, Minister of Environment, Panama. 2. **Mr. Padu Franco**, Programme Manager, Bezos Earth Fund 3. **Mr. Derrick John**, Chairman, National Toshaos Council. 4. **Dr. James C. Deutsch**, Chief Executive Officer, Rainforest Trust. 5. **Dr. Hyginus Leon, Executive Director,** Development Bank for Resilient Prosperity

	Mr. Derrick John: Indigenous-led delivery: *Define the conditions for direct access, community governance, accountability and equitable benefit-sharing in Guyana.* **Dr. James C. Deutsch: Conservation delivery partnerships:** *Outline how conservation organisations can support project origination, due diligence, monitoring and implementation through government and community systems.* **Dr. Hyginus Leon: Development-bank structuring and scale:** *Discuss how regional and national development banks can address financing challenges faced by SIDS by aggregating projects, derisking investments, and deploying catalytic capital to support resilient biodiversity investment at scale.*	
15.00-15.30	**CLOSE**	**Government of Guyana**

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