



## E-NEWS BRIEF

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### PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY MEETING ABOUT IWOKRAMA

Yesterday afternoon His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, held a two-hour emergency meeting to discuss Iwokrama's financial difficulties and immediate threat of closure.

Along with Iwokrama senior management, meeting attendees included [NRDDB](#) leaders, Government Ministers, and the Commissioner of Forests.

"The President made it clear that yesterday's meeting was not about closure, but to examine ways to ensure Iwokrama will continue," according to Iwokrama Director General Graham Watkins.

To cover core costs (US\$60,000 per month) from December 2004 to April 2005, President Jagdeo committed to finding US\$300,000 of immediate bridging funds.

This action underscores the President's support of the [local communities](#). Iwokrama is the largest non-government employer in the North Rupununi.

The great local concern for any possible demise of Iwokrama was demonstrated by the mobilisation of NRDDB leaders at such short notice. These community leaders stressed to the President the importance of Iwokrama's work in other key areas, including regional [wetlands research and conservation](#), sustainable [Arapaima fishing](#) business, and [road management](#). They commented, "We're all very relieved in our minds and we will continue to work hand in hand with the Government, Iwokrama and other stakeholders in the future."

The recent assurances by President Jagdeo will maintain Iwokrama's role as an international model for the conservation and sustainable use of tropical forests.

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