



EPA's role in the Tourism Sector

Guyana is home to the largest Fresh Water Fish, Giant River Otters, Giant Anteater, Harpy Eagles and many more rare and wonderful animals which are not seen elsewhere in the world in their natural habitats. The rivers, creeks, savannahs, forests and urban environments provide a home for the fauna and the flora in Guyana; all such environments must therefore be protected and conserved. The EPA was established under the Environmental Protection Act 1996, to provide for the management, conservation, protection and improvement of the environment, the prevention or control of pollution, the assessment of the impact of economic development on the environment, the sustainable use of natural resources and for matters incidental thereto or connected therewith.



The impact of the Tourism Industry, comprising Hotels, Resorts, Interior Lodges, Inns,



Guesthouses, Parks, on the Environment may not be obvious to most Guyanese, however, this industry has the potential to pollute the environment in several ways. These include Noise pollution, potentially solid and liquid waste pollution, possibly pollution of rivers, creeks and

wells, as well as destruction of natural habitats which are homes to the vast biodiversity of animals and plants in Guyana. As a result of the potential impact on the environment, Tourism facilities are required to be authorized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Tourism Unit within the Environmental Management Permitting Division of the EPA is responsible for processing Applications for Environmental Authorisation of both New and Existing Operations within the Tourism sector. Accommodation entities with ten (10) or more rooms (including restaurants, malls, plazas and bars) are required to apply for authorisation under the Act. At the same time, should any of these entities be located within a sensitive area and does not reach the ten (10) room requirement, such facilities must also be authorised. The Application Forms may be uplifted from the EPA's office during working hours or the website (www.epaguyana.org) at the developer's convenience.



The EPA after inspection of the resort, interior lodge, inn, guesthouse or hotel, provides the Developer/Owner with a Permit that includes conditions that are geared toward minimizing negative impacts on the Environment. In addition, one specific aim of the EPA regarding the Tourism Industry is to increase energy efficiency in innovative ways and reduce the dependence and inefficient use of carbon rich fuels.

Currently, the EPA is focused in Regions 7 and 9. This is as a result of large numbers of unauthorized facilities in these areas. Unauthorised facilities should note that operating without a valid Environmental Authorisation constitutes a breach of the Environmental Protection Act, 1996, making them liable to the penalties prescribed, including fines, imprisonment and closure of the operation. It should be noted that the Environmental Protection Agency gives first consent to all projects that could have potential impacts on the environment.

Share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: "Our Earth, Our Environment", C/O EIT Division, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at: eit.epaguyana@gmail.com.