

About IBG – GSF BIO

IBG: International Society for Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield

GSFBIO: Guiana Shield Foundation on Biodiversity

IBG Board of Directors (2016-2019):

Patrick Williams (Guyana, President)

Vanessa Benn (National Representative Guyana, Vice President)

Gwen Landburg (National Representative Suriname)

Ligia Simonian (National Representative Brazil)

MariaPia Bevilacqua (National Representative Venezuela)

Mercedes Mejia (National Representative Colombia)

Raphaelle Rinaldo (National Representative French Guiana)

Burton Lim (International Representative American Continent)

In April 2002, a Priority Setting Workshop was held through the collaboration of Conservation International,

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Union for Conservation of Nature

(IUCN), National Committee of the Netherlands (IUCN-NL) and the Guiana Shield Initiative in Paramaribo,

Suriname. The workshop which focused on the holistic nature of the problems confronting the Guiana Shield as a unit resulted in the signing of the Paramaribo Declaration. One of the primary actions emerging out of this workshop was the hosting of a biennial congress on the biodiversity of the Guiana Shield. In support of the Congress, it was proposed that an International Society of the Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield (IBG) be established as the main vehicle for cooperation in this regard.

The IBG was created on the 4th of August 2010, at the final session of the second International Congress on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield, which was held in Macapá, Amapá State, Brazil. The official launch of the IBG took place in August 2013 at the Third International Biodiversity Congress which was held in Paramaribo, Suriname. The first International Congress was held in 2006 hosted by Venezuela and coordinated by an informal IBG committee.

The IBG exists to foster and develop education and research in all disciplines contributing to the knowledge and stewardship of the biodiversity of the Guiana Shield and the conservation, preservation, and sustainable management of its natural, rural and urban ecosystems. Membership is open to all persons and groups living in or working on biodiversity and related issues of the Guiana Shield with interests in its conservation and a willingness to become both an active participant in IBG and a supporter of its basic aims.

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IBG is an international society without political, national, social or cultural affiliations. The society will strive to maintain an international reputation as a highly reliable and independent source of information and advice on biodiversity and related environmental issues of the Guiana Shield ecoregion.

The Society seeks to promote:

- A growing understanding of the structure, functioning, conservation, use and sustainable management of the biodiversity of the Guiana Shield through disciplines including, but are not limited to, taxonomy, systematics, ecology, environmental engineering, agriculture, forestry, aquiculture, geographic information systems, hydroecology, landscape ecology, mathematical modeling, conservation, ethnobiology, social sciences, economics, environmental legislation, technology applied to rehabilitation, and water quality studies.
- Wise stewardship of the natural resources and informed environmental policy, especially as each relates to biodiversity and sustainable management of the Guiana Shield;
- A strong role in the professional development of Guiana Shield inhabitants, including students and early-career members who wish to be involved in society activities as participants and leaders;
- Education and training programs in biodiversity and sustainable management issues for the Guiana Shield inhabitants and establishing networks among the countries involved;
- Inter-country research projects in biodiversity disciplines aiming to create local capacities, public awareness, and increased research infrastructure with equal opportunities across the Guiana Shield.
- Communication and thematic networks among members using the internet, scientific journals, and the Conferences on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield.

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Governance of IBG

IBG is governed by a General Assembly and a Board of Directors with all decisions by a majority vote, unless otherwise noted.

General Assembly

The General Assembly consist of individuals in all member classifications who attend the general business meeting at the Conferences of Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield, and who will decide when and where the next conference will occur. The First General Assembly was held at the Macapá, 2nd International Congress on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield. The General Assembly is expected to meet on at least one occasion during each Conference to discuss and vote on matters presented to it by the Board of Directors or on motions made by members in attendance. Currently over 160 members are registered with IBG.

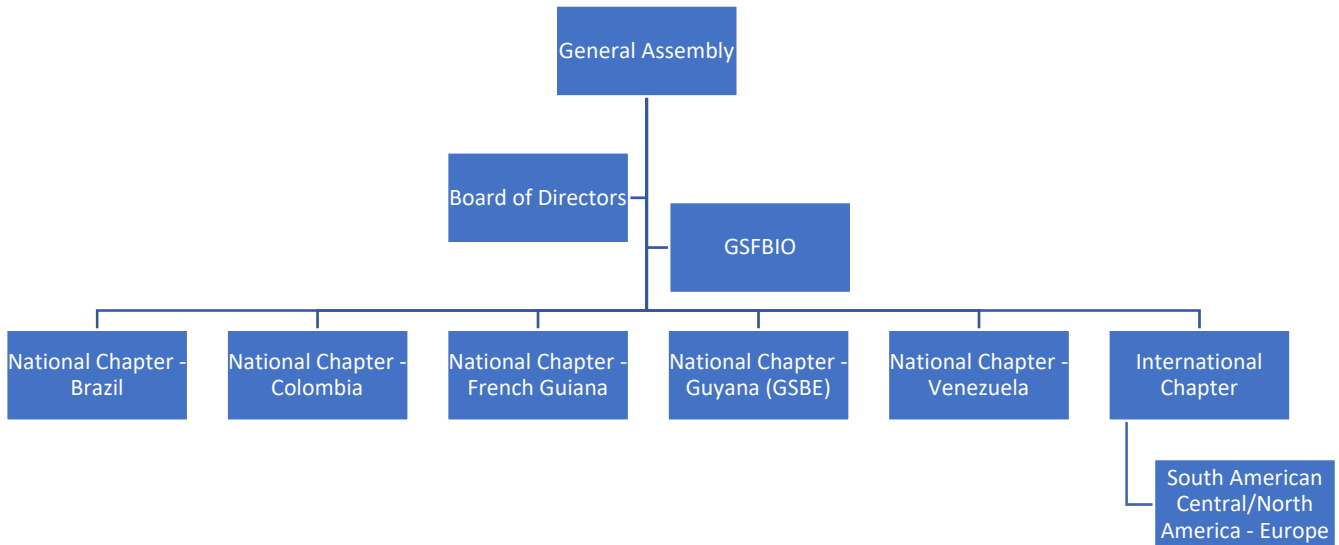
Board of Directors

The Board of Directors can consist of up to 15 voting members and up to 6 ex officio members (President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor, who may also be voting members of the Board). All Directors must be members of the Society and present at the Conference to be elected. The distribution of Board members should be composed of 2 Representatives (1 female and 1 male, if possible) from each country of the Guiana Shield - Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, and Brazil - who are active and engaged in biodiversity work and belong to a research, education or non-governmental organization (NGO) institution of the Guiana Shield region in Brazil (Amapá, Roraima, Amazonas, and Para), Colombia (Guaviare, Guainía, Vaupés, Vichada, Meta and Caquetá), Venezuela (Bolívar, Amazonas, and Delta Amacuro), Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana. Only Conference members from a specific country can vote to elect a Representative from their country. There will be 3 International Representatives belonging to (1) South America, (2) Central and Northern America, and (3)

Europe. International members can be from any type of institution, corporation, government agency, or NGO, but this person should have a history of involvement in biodiversity studies, conservation, or sustainable management issues in the Guiana Shield. All voting members may elect the 3 International Representatives. Each National and International Representative will form the National and International Chapters of the Society.

Directors are elected during the General Assembly at the Conference of Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield and will serve until the next Conference. If a seat on the Board becomes vacant, the Board may appoint a member to complete the unexpired term.

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GSFBIO

The Guiana Shield Foundation on Biodiversity (GSFBIO) is the executive body of the International Society of Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield (IBG). The GSF BIO was established in the process of organizing the III International Congress on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield and was legally incorporated on the 1st of August 2013 at Paramaribo, Suriname.

The purpose of the Foundation is to execute all decisions of the IBG and to function as its administrative agency. This may include:

- a. Keeping records of the membership of the IBG and all related administrative functions, including proper bookkeeping;
- b. The organization of the General Assembly of the IBG;
- c. The organization of the International Congress on Biodiversity of the Guiana Shield;
- d. The organization of special symposia, seminars, courses and workshops;
- e. The development of projects, especially in the areas of research and academia;
- f. Fundraising for proposed seminars, courses, workshops, projects and other events;
- g. Dissemination of knowledge produced by the IBG
- h. Establishing and maintaining a website for the IBG;

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- i. Developing and maintaining relations with organizations that may promote the goals of the IBG;

The Foundation will take all necessary actions to incorporate the IBG as an association under the laws of Suriname.

The GSF BIO Board of Directors make up the current Central Committee of the IBG:

Patrick Williams (Guyana, President)
Vanessa Benn (National Representative Guyana, Vice President)
Gwen Landburg (National Representative Suriname)
Ligia Simonian (National Representative Brazil)
MariaPia Bevilacqua (National Representative Venezuela)
Mercedes Mejia (National Representative Colombia)
Raphaelle Rinaldo (National Representative French Guiana)
Burton Lim (International Representative American Continent)

National Chapters

National Chapters are expected to be formalized in each of the Guiana Shield countries. National Chapters will assist the IBG in organizing the International Biodiversity Congress in the country approved by the General Assembly. A congress secretariat is expected to be established in country of the next congress.