



The BCCCA/University of the West of England

Guyana Cocoa Research Initiative

Helping Guyana realise the potential of its cocoa genetic resources

The Guyana Cocoa Research Initiative (GCRI) is a collaborative project between British environmental science graduates from the University of the West of England and Guyanese researchers from the National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI) with financial and advisory support from BCCCA. The primary objectives are to prospect for wild cocoa in the remote forest areas of Southern Guyana and to help re-establish the Guyana National Cocoa Genebank at Timehri. It is hoped that by helping Guyana to conserve and realise the potential of its genetic resources it will open the way for Guyana to develop its cocoa production.



Ten graduate students took part in GCRI 98, thanks to support from a number of sources including NARI/EPA/CBD. BCCCA provided funding for pilot explorations in 1995 and 1996 as well as this year's initiative.

GCRI 98 consisted of:

- Training at Cocoa Research Unit, Trinidad for expedition members in collection and curation techniques and dissemination of this information to Guyanese researchers at NARI.
- Preparation of the Timehri Genebank for receiving newly collected wild material.
- Collection and documentation of wild cocoa in the Primo's inlet/Rewa River and Manudi Mountains regions. Budwood and seeds were collected for establishment in the Timehri Genebank together with leaf samples for genetic analysis in the UK. Each accession was fully documented using a Global Positioning System to accurately determine the collection site, and its morphology described using the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute crop descriptors. General observations on the pests and diseases present were also recorded.

For more information please contact:

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