

Marauny Na'na Emandobo
Lokono Shikwabana
(*"Marowijne – our territory"*)



**Traditional use and management of
the Lower Marowijne area by the Kaliña and Lokono**

Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden-Marowijne

Marauny Na'na Emandobo

Lokono Shikwabana

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**Traditional use and management of the Lower Marowijne area
by the Kaliña and Lokono**

**A Surinamese case study in the context of article 10(c)
of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

Wan Shi Sha (Marijkedorp), 24 February 2006

By:

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Translated from the original in Dutch

Also available in Spanish

Photographs:

Cover: Bigiston, the rock in the river containing incisions (petroglyphs), after which the village was named.

Photo: E.R. Kambel

Back cover: Sunset over the Marowijne, Galibi. Photo: C. de Jong

Printed in Uruguay by I. Rosgal S.A.

Dep. Legal N° 339083/06



Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to accept the honor, in my role as chairman of CLIM (Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden Marowijne – Commission on Land Rights of the Indigenous People of Lower Marowijne) to provide an introduction to this report by means of this preface.

For centuries, indigenous peoples have been passing on information to their descendants through cave paintings and stories. More recently, prominent indigenous authors such as the late Mr. Cirino and Nardo Aloema have written indigenous literature intended for educational purposes. Here, the fundamental idea and motivation was to bring about an understanding of our culture and thereby to continue its existence.

The aim of this project is to create the impetus for indigenous researchers, under expert guidance, to record their own traditional ways of life and the historical backgrounds of their villages. This information will then be made available to them and later may serve as archival and study material. Indigenous culture remains a fascinating subject for modern science and contemporary society because the secret of age-old survival has not yet been revealed.

Tamoesi (The Great God) has made us the gift of nature and we are an inseparable part of it, which is why we are striving to obtain recognition of our land rights.

It is with pride that the 'Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden Marowijne', whose aim is to achieve legal recognition of the land rights of the Lower Marowijne area, presents this project. We would like to express our special thanks to everyone in the eight villages who, in whatever way, has contributed to this project.

The fieldwork and compilation were achieved thanks to a grant from Swedbio. Special thanks go to Ellen-Rose Kambel, the research team, the coordinator of our Bureau, Grace Watamaleo, and Caroline de Jong, each of whom did a wonderful job from the preparation to the culmination of this project. Furthermore, we thank Jacqueline Jubithana as national coordinator, the VIDS Bureau and its chairman, Mr. Pané, as well as all the village leaders. May the Almighty (Tamoesi) guide you and bless you.

A.R. Pierre
Chairman, CLIM
Pierrekondre, 17 February 2006

Contents

Foreword		i
Introduction		1
Chapter 1	The Lower Marowijne area	5
	Map of the Lower Marowijne area	6
	Population	7
	The district of Marowijne	8
Chapter 2	The indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne	15
	Christiaankondre	15
	Langamankondre	16
	Erowarte	18
	Tapuku	20
	Pierrekondre	22
	Marijkedorp	23
	Alfonsdorp	24
	Bigiston	26
Chapter 3	Old settlements	29
	Overview of old settlements	32
Chapter 4	Agriculture	41
	Crops	41
	The agricultural plots	43
	Planting and harvesting	45
	Old agricultural plots	45
	Changes	46
	Role division based on gender	48
	Agricultural areas	48
	Property and ownership of agricultural areas	49
Chapter 5	Hunting	51
	Game population	53
	Hunting grounds	54
	Hunting methods	56
	Hunting rituals and customs	58
Chapter 6	Fishing	59
	Fish population	62
	Fishing techniques	63
Chapter 7	Use of non-timber forest products	67
	Forest fruits	67
	Weaving	68
	Pottery	72
	Hammocks	76
	Decorative beadwork	77

Chapter 8	Use of wood	81
	House building	83
	Boat building	85
	Firewood	86
	Wood carving	88
	Wood-cutting areas	88
Chapter 9	Sustainable use of nature	93
	The right balance between man and nature	93
	Rule I Avoid young specimens	94
	Rule II Use only what you need	95
	Special species	96
	Sacred and special sites	100
	Observance and enforcement of rules	102
	Passing on of rules	103
Chapter 10	Threats to and protection of the Lower Marowijne area	105
	Initiatives to protect our area and lifestyle	109
	Next steps	111
	Summary and conclusion	113
	Bibliography	116
Annex	People interviewed	117

Tables

Table 1.1	Number of inhabitants in 2005	7
Table 1.2	Education and health facilities per village	14
Table 3.1	Old settlements in the Galibi area	33
Table 3.2	Old settlements in the Wane Creek area	36
Table 3.3	Old settlements in the Moiwana Creek area	36
Table 3.4	Old settlements in the Erowarte area	37
Table 3.5	Old settlements in the Bigiston area	38
Table 4.1	Food crops (Alfonsdorp, Bigiston, Christiaankondre, Marijkedorp)	41
Table 4.2	Growing seasons (Langamankondre)	45
Table 5.1	Game in the Lower Marowijne area	51
Table 5.2	Hunting calendar (Bigiston)	53
Table 6.1	Seasonal fish catch in Erowarte, Tapuku, Pierrekondre	60
Table 6.2	Fish species by season (river fish, Bigiston)	60
Table 6.3	The influence of the moon on the water level (Erowarte)	61
Table 6.4	Seasonal catch (Christiaankondre)	61
Table 6.5	Creek and swamp fish (Alfonsdorp)	62
Table 6.6	River fish (Bigiston)	62
Table 6.7	Seasonal fishing methods (Christiaankondre)	63
Table 7.1	Fruits gathered (Marijkedorp)	67
Table 7.2	Seasonal forest fruits (Marijkedorp)	68
Table 7.3	Collecting of materials for beadwork (Galibi)	79
Table 8.1	Wood-cutting seasons (Galibi)	81
Table 8.2	Wood species and their use	82
Table 9.1	Special sites/forbidden sites	101
Table 10.1	Species that have declined noticeably in the Lower Marowijne	109

Boxes

Box 0.1	The Convention on Biological Diversity	1
Box 1.1	Maroons in the district of Marowijne	12
Box 3.1	How Alusiaka was sold	31
Box 4.1	<i>Moshiro</i> and <i>majoeri</i>	44
Box 4.2	Processing cassava	47
Box 5.1	<i>Omakano</i>	52
Box 7.1	<i>“A good man must be able to do everything”</i>	71
Box 7.2	The test of the stinging ants	75
Box 7.3	<i>Karawasi</i>	80
Box 8.1	<i>Epekodono</i>	87
Box 8.2	The wood-cutting permit (HKV) and community forests	90
Box 9.1	Maraka stones	93
Box 9.2	The use of <i>neku</i>	95
Box 9.3	The story of the dolphin and the manatee	97
Box 9.4	<i>“Becoming a piay is a calling”</i>	99
Box 9.5	<i>Takini atjoeloe enenenbo</i> (the takini shaman)	100
Box 9.6	The village administration	104

Introduction

In 1996 Suriname ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and as of April 1996 the country is legally obliged to enforce this Convention. One of the provisions of the Convention (Article 10, paragraph (c)) reads as follows:

Each Contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate: Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.

In order to comply with the obligations of this provision, according to the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Contracting Parties are required to:

- Provide indigenous peoples with security of tenure and rights over traditional territories (both land and water);
- Recognize indigenous peoples' authority over and use of traditional natural resources;
- Legally protect indigenous languages, cultures, sacred sites and the heritage of indigenous peoples.¹

The Secretariat of the CBD recognizes and emphasizes that as a result of the age-old use of biological resources in their living environment, indigenous communities have developed a comprehensive and valuable traditional knowledge of nature. Consequently, Article 10(c) forms a crucial link with Article 8, paragraph (j), which obliges the Contracting Parties “to respect, preserve and maintain traditional knowledge.”

Although Articles 10(c) and 8(j) both make important provisions that deal with biodiversity and indigenous communities, to date most attention has been paid to Article 8(j). Relatively little has been done to understand and implement Article 10(c) or to provide practical examples to help national and international policy makers achieve this end. In the various definitions, decisions and guidelines that pertain to sustainable use and Article 10(c), the participating countries request practical information about and examples of sustainable use of biological diversity by indigenous and local communities (case studies). They also seek advice on how best to implement this Article. (Decisions V/24 and VII/12).

Box 0.1 The Convention on Biological Diversity

Biodiversity, or biological diversity, is the umbrella term given to all plants and animals on Earth. Places with high biodiversity have a great diversity of plant and animal species. Places with low biodiversity, however, may have many plants and animals, but all of the same kind. Worldwide, biodiversity deterioration is accelerating: many plants and animals are becoming extinct and the areas with low biodiversity are increasing. This has serious consequences for mankind who is unable to survive without plants and animals. To address this problem, international agreements were adopted in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to protect the Earth's biodiversity. These agreements have been laid down in an international convention.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (the CBD) is a worldwide agreement between governments on the preservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use. The Convention specifies how countries that are signatories can achieve this objective. Each country decides whether to sign the Convention, however, once signed up the governments of these countries are obliged to comply with the agreements laid down in the CBD. The signatory countries (the Contracting Parties) meet every two years to discuss the Convention's implementation. During this meeting (the Conference of Parties – COP) decisions are taken that have to be implemented by the Contracting Parties. Recently, a number of decisions were taken relating to indigenous communities and their right to preserve and promote biodiversity.

¹ Secretariat of the CBD (1997) *Traditional Knowledge and Biological Diversity*. UNEP/CBD/TKBD/1/2 <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/tk/wstkbd-01/official/wstkbd-01-02-en.pdf>

Purpose of this report

In 2002 the Forest Peoples Programme, a UK-based non-governmental organization, started a project entitled “*Linking forest peoples’ rights and local knowledge of biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods to national and international biodiversity and forest policies and programmes. Interpretation and implementation of Article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity.*” This project targets the practical implementation of Article 10(c) of the CBD. For this purpose five case studies were carried out on different continents,² in the process of which “*the customary use of biological resources*” was mapped. The project aims to produce so-called work models based on the experiences of indigenous and local communities to be used in interpreting and implementing Article 10(c). This information is to be presented at the forthcoming meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 8), to be held in Curitiba (Brazil) in March 2006.

Although Suriname began the drafting of its National Biodiversity Strategy last year, this document has not yet been published. During the workshops that were held within this context it was, however, clear that there is insufficient understanding as to the meaning of Article 10(c). This case study of the traditional use and sustainable management of the Lower Marowijne area by the Kaliña and the Lokono communities of Christiaankondre, Langamankondre, Erowarte, Tapuku, Pierrekondre, Marijkedorp, Alfonsdorp and Bigiston, aims to contribute to a better understanding of Article 10(c) and ultimately to the full enforcement and implementation of the Convention in Suriname.

Land rights

In addition, this report should be viewed in the light of the many years of effort by the communities of the Lower Marowijne area to gain legal recognition of their longstanding collective ownership of the territory that they have traditionally used and inhabited.

Despite the considerable number of international treaties ratified by Suriname and the rulings of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the UN Human Rights Committee that Suriname is to recognize³ the collective rights to land of the indigenous and tribal peoples, Surinamese legislation still starts from the principle that all land and natural resources in Suriname are the property of the State. Only those persons that can prove possession of title – a document showing that the State has granted them that piece of land – may claim rights. Ownership based on age-old indigenous traditional rights is not recognized and, pursuant to Surinamese law, indigenous peoples may not lay claim to their ancestral territories.

By virtue of this report the indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne are establishing their collective ownership of the land, territories and natural resources that they have **traditionally inhabited and used**. Since 2000 VIDS and, more recently, CLIM (see below) have submitted petitions seeking dialogue with the government to implement a statutory provision to recognize and protect the collective ownership rights to the land and natural resources of the Lower Marowijne area. To date the government has given no concrete reaction to these petitions. Expectations are that following the Inter-American Court of Human Rights’ ruling in the Moiwana case, this issue will be expedited. After all, Suriname has been legally required to provide legislation recognizing the Maroon community’s rights to land and the demarcation of their lands, with the **informed consent** of the neighboring indigenous communities, including Alfonsdorp.⁴

2 In addition to Suriname, 10(c) case studies were carried out in Venezuela, Guyana, Cameroon and Thailand.

3 See Human Rights Committee, *Concluding Observations: Suriname*, CCPR/CO/80/SUR, 4 May 2004; and CERD, *Concluding Observations/Comments, Suriname*, CERD/C/64/CO/9, 12 March 2004; CERD, *Follow-Up Procedure Decision 3(66) Suriname*, CERD/C/66/SUR/Dec.3, 9 March 2005 and CERD, *Prevention Of Racial Discrimination, Including Early Warning Measures And Urgent Action Procedures Decision 1 (67) Suriname*, CERD/C/Dec/Sur/2, 18 August 2005.

4 Judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the Case of Moiwana Village v. Suriname, issued 15 June 2005, section 209 and 210.

Implementing organizations

This is a collaborative project between the *Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname* (Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname, VIDS), the *Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden-Marowijne* (Land Rights Commission of the Indigenous Communities of the Lower Marowijne, CLIM), and the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP).

VIDS, which encompasses all the indigenous village leaders of Suriname, was formed in 1992 with the aim of achieving legal recognition and protection of the land rights of the indigenous peoples in Suriname, as well as enhancing the sustainable development of the indigenous communities. Since 2002 VIDS has had an office in Paramaribo (the '*Stichting Bureau VIDS*' – Bureau VIDS Foundation) from which its activities are coordinated.

CLIM is the local “operating unit” of VIDS in Lower Marowijne. This committee was formed in 2003 and is engaged in all activities that pertain to rights to land, territories and natural resources in the Lower Marowijne area. CLIM consists of all eight village leaders plus one representative per village. Since August 2005, CLIM has had its own office in Marijkedorp, where a local coordinator, Grace Watamaleo, is employed.

The Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) is a UK-based organization formed in 1990 by the World Rainforest Movement, which aims to safeguard the human rights of people who live in and from tropical forests. Since its formation, FPP has developed into an organization which is recognized throughout the world for its support of communities in numerous countries.

Organization and implementation of the study

This report was produced through the efforts of the inhabitants of all eight indigenous villages in the Lower Marowijne area and in particular the “Lower Marowijne 10(c) Research Team”, consisting of Henry Zaalman (village leader, Marijkedorp), Georgette Kumanajare (Marijkedorp), Louis Biswane (village assistant, Pierrekondre), Grace Watamaleo (CLIM coordinator), Michel Barend (village assistant, Bigiston), Sylvia Oeloekanamoe (Langamankondre), Steven Majarawai (Christiaankondre), and Harold Galgren (village leader, Alfonsdorp).



**Researchers during training
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

These eight researchers carried out the field work, conducted the interviews and recorded the accounts on which this report is based and are, therefore, also the authors of this final report. They took part in a four-day research training course in April 2005 conducted by Ellen-Rose Kambel and Caroline de Jong, which included discussion and practice of different interview techniques and research methods. The interview questions and research methodology were agreed jointly. After this, a meeting was held in each village to explain to the villagers the purpose of the research and to request their cooperation.



Following this training the researchers started their information gathering in May. In total, about 65 accounts were recorded. Individual and group interviews were held with elders, hunters, fishers, women potters, boat builders, etc. Together with the village authorities they visited sites of special biological, cultural or economic value. The researchers also wrote down accounts of a variety of cultural activities; elders were interviewed about the history of their village, and a number of old stories and/or legends were recorded.

**Researcher Michel Barend presents the findings in Alfonsdorp
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**



An interview (l.)
and tour of the
village (r.)
(Photos:
E.R. Kambel
and K. Neke)



Previously, in 2000, within the context of the Lower Marowijne demarcation project, interviews had been held about the history of the villages. In 2005 Caroline de Jong reviewed these interviews and incorporated them in the report, *Verhalen uit the mondelinge geschiedenis van de inheemse dorpen in het Beneden Marowijne gebied* (Stories from the oral history of the indigenous villages in the Lower Marowijne Area), 2005. Finally, use was made of Caroline de Jong's previous research in the Archives of the Netherlands, which had been commissioned by CLIM, to identify maps, reports and letters of explorers, missionaries and other Europeans that had visited the Lower Marowijne area since the 15th century. This research proved that the Lower Marowijne area has long been inhabited by the ancestors of the current inhabitants of the eight villages, even though the exact location of their settlements has varied.

In August 2005 a first draft of the report was discussed in each of the eight villages. During these meetings the villagers commented on the content and on this basis the information was amended, added to, adjusted or deleted (see pictures below).

Finally, two large workshops were organized, at which the threats to the area's biodiversity and the recommendations to the government were discussed.

In February 2006, the final report was presented to all the villages, and the communities once again pronounced their approval of the report and the recommendations. On February 24, 2006 the report will be presented to the government, international donors and environmental organizations, and foreign representatives.

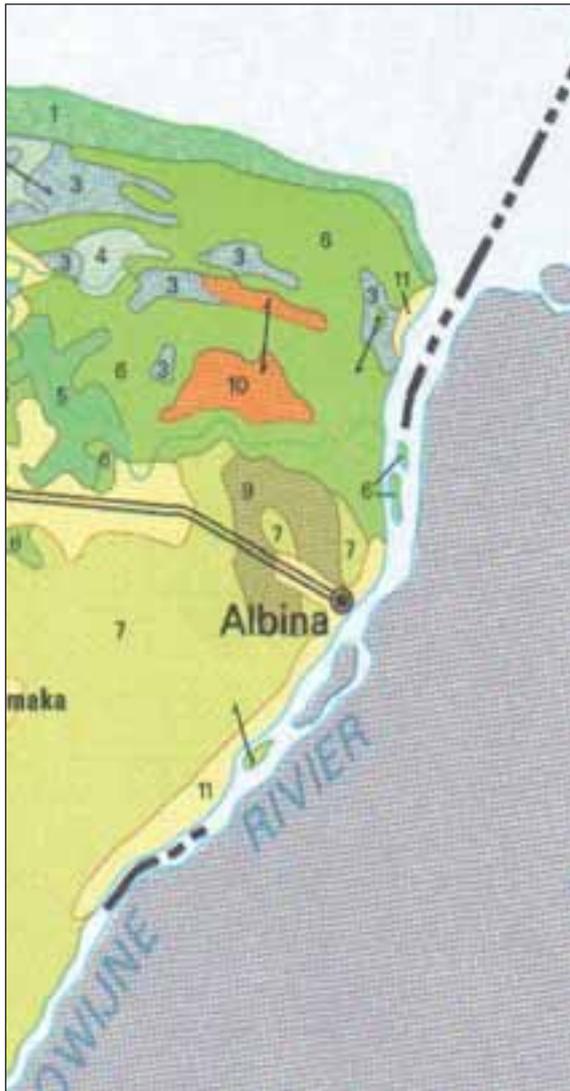


All the information recorded is approved by the villagers
(Photos: C. de Jong)

Content of the report

The report consists of three parts. The first (Chapters 1 through 3) gives an overview of the Lower Marowijne area, the people, the history and the current situation of the eight communities. Chapters 4 through 8 then describe how traditional use is made of the land, the forest, the rivers, the creeks and other parts of the ancestral area. In the final part (Chapters 9 and 10), the traditional rules and customs that contribute to the sustainable use and protection of biological resources are touched upon. In this regard, threats to this traditional use are also discussed, as well as the ways the communities have tried to protect their territory and lifestyle, and the steps the Surinamese government ought to take to comply with the obligations of Article 10(c).

Chapter 1 The Lower Marowijne area



Vegetation: Lower Marowijne area
(Source: Suriname Planatlas 1988)

In 2000 the Lower Marowijne area was mapped by eight indigenous villages to identify their traditional living areas and settlements. The area is shown on the map as a triangular region, bordering the Atlantic Ocean to the north and the Marowijne River to the east, from the estuary up to the Armina Falls. An imaginary line forms the western border from the Armina Falls (formerly known as **Pegoto**) up to **Waldi-kampu**, a fishers' encampment on the coast.

The lifeline of the area is the Marowijne River which forms the border between Suriname and French Guiana. Its two sources, the Lawa and the Litani, rise in the Tumuk Humak Mountains near the Brazilian border, and the river flows into the Atlantic Ocean.

The terrain of the Lower Marowijne area can be roughly divided into three types: i) the young coastal area with saltish and brakish clay grounds; ii) the old coastal area with loamy and clay grounds (between Galibi and Albina); and iii) a hilly landscape with sandy, loamy soil (between Albina and Bigiston). In addition, there are sand and shale grooves and savanna. Changes can be also be seen in the vegetation as you move south, away from the Atlantic coast, with mangrove forest along the coast (1 on the map) giving way to high swampy forest between Christiaankondre and Albina (6) and finally to high dryland forest from Albina to Bigiston (11).⁵

Elevated swampy forest, which may flood during the rainy season, typically contains relatively high species diversity of palms, including *maripa* (*Atalea maripa*) and *pina*. In the undergrowth many *palulu* (*Heliconia*) and *warimbo* (*Ischnosiphon*) species can be found. Elevated dryland forest, "as a rule, has high species diversity and is of mixed composition". In the undergrowth *pramaca* (*Astrocaryun sciophilum*) palms are mainly to be found.⁶

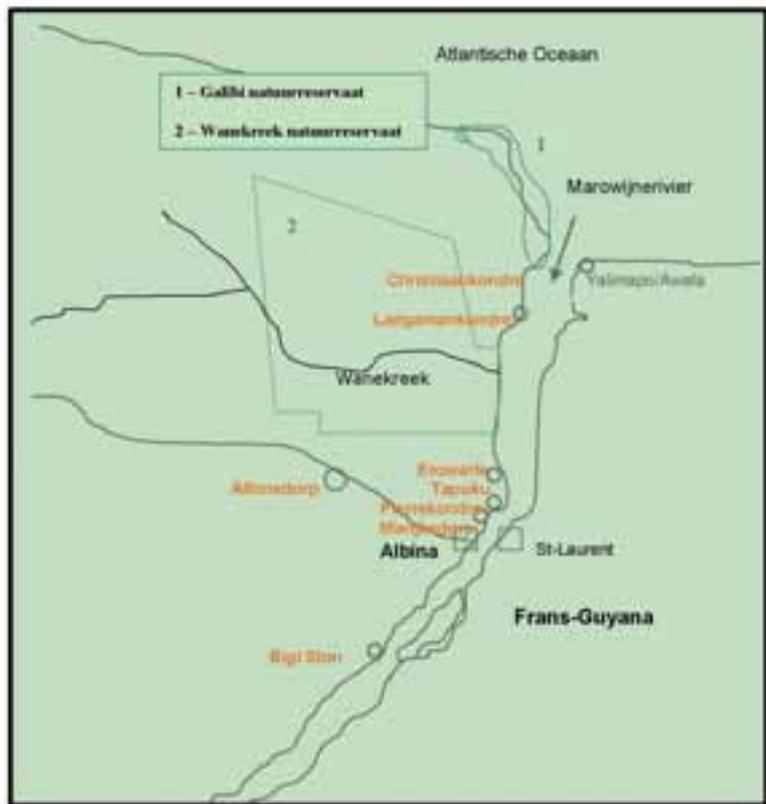


Mangrove forest along the banks of the Marowijne
(Photo: C. de Jong)

⁵ Suriname Planatlas, map B6 and B7.

⁶ *Ibid*, 'Vegetation', map B7.

Map of the Lower Marowijne area



Population

Since time immemorial the Lower Marowijne area has been inhabited by the current eight communities; as far as the oldest inhabitants can remember they and their ancestors have lived there. According to the elders, the Kaliña lived mainly along the seashore and the Marowijne River, while the Lokono tended to settle their villages inland, along the creeks. In particular, Wane Creek was an important Lokono settlement. This area was gradually abandoned after the outbreak of disease in the thirties, and the local people settled in and around the current Alfonsdorp and Marijkedorp (see Chapter 2). To date these are the only two Lokono villages along the Surinamese side of the Lower Marowijne area, the other villages being principally inhabited by Kaliña.

Table 1.1 Number of inhabitants in 2005 (Source: village registration)

Christiaankondre	
Langamankondre	800
Erowarte	125
Tapuku	129
Pierrekondre	150
Marijkedorp	287
Alfonsdorp	285
Bigiston	250
Total	2,026

From oral accounts it appears there are still memories of a time when wars were waged with other indigenous people who lived along the upper course of the Marowijne River. The now abandoned village of **Pegoto** that was situated at the Armina Falls, is considered the border between the indigenous peoples of the Lower and the Upper Marowijne.

Written sources confirm that the local population dropped dramatically with the coming of the Europeans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This was as a result of disease and killings; the movement of people to join dominant groups such as the Kaliña; and the migration of people further south. On both sides of the Lawa – one of the sources of the Marowijne River – is where the Wayana now live, whereas the Tapanahony River, a branch of the Marowijne River, is as much a settlement of the Wayana as Trio-indigenous communities.



Temeren ('written') rock at Bigiston on which the grinding incisions are clearly visible (Photo: E.R. Kambel)

The Lower Marowijne area had been inhabited long before the arrival of the Europeans. Pottery remains

of the Barbakoeba culture, whose roots were in the Orinoco area, have been found at a number of places in upper Wane Creek.⁷ This culture came into being around 1000 AD. In addition, pottery remains of the Koriabo culture from the east (French Guiana and Brazil) have been found along the Marowijne River, near Christiaankondre and Bigiston, and also along creeks west of the river. This culture came to Suriname around 1200 BC.⁸

⁷ Aad Versteeg, *Suriname voor Columbus* (Suriname before Columbus), Paramaribo 2003, pp. 139, 160-164.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-188.

In addition to these pottery findings, in the Marowijne area petroglyphs have been found on the *Temeren* rock near **Bigiston**, which are also of great archeological interest. This rock and its drawings play an important role in the stories and the legends of the Kaliña. However, the meaning of the drawings and the date of their creation are unknown. Other ancient remains have been found which clearly show that this area was already occupied and used by the original inhabitants. These include grinding grooves occurring in various places in the Marowijne basin and more recent unusual findings such as the earthenware mask found by the village leader, Harold Galgren, near **Alfonsdorp**. Present inhabitants report that they still regularly discover arrow points and potsherds in the forest or when creating their new agricultural plots.



**Pre-Columbian stone mask
found near Alfonsdorp
(Photo: Versteeg 2003)**

The district of Marowijne

History

In the latter half of the 16th century and during the 17th century, various expeditions from Europe put in at the Marowijne River. The first voyages to Suriname were mainly inspired by the lust for gold. The early voyagers, including the map makers, regularly made reference in their accounts and maps to the original inhabitants. In addition, some of them clearly referred to names of places and village leaders. In 1596 the Englishman, Lawrence Keymis, referred to **Iaremappo**, the settlement of the Caribs, which was located at almost the same spot as the current **Yalimapo** on the eastern (French) bank of the river.⁹ In an account about an expedition along the Marowijne River between 1609 and 1613 written by Unton Fisher, there is a very extensive overview of indigenous villages (for example **Marracomwin**, **Moyyemon**, and **Tonorima**) including the names of village leaders (for example Seepane).¹⁰

Because of the presence of the Europeans and the diseases they brought with them, the number of indigenous peoples dropped quickly in Suriname. However, the Lower Marowijne area was an exception as there were no inhabited plantations along the river. In the 18th century the rest of Suriname expanded greatly and the number of plantations along other big rivers, where many indigenous people had also originally lived, quickly increased. Many indigenous people avoided contact with planters and Maroons and for their safety and health reasons they retreated up the creeks and onto the savannas. As a result of this the indigenous settlements were overlooked by the cartographers. But there were no plantations along the Marowijne River and the indigenous communities were, in the main, left alone. Thus, unlike the 16th and 17th century documents, those produced in the 18th century made no reference to specific places, although the presence of indigenous groups is described in narratives and recorded on maps.¹¹ By the 19th century some

9 Lawrence Keymis, *A relation of the second voyage to Guiana* (London 1596), republished Amsterdam and New York 1968, no page numbering.

10 "A relation of the habitations and other observations on the river Marwin, and the adjoining regions", in: C. Alexander Harris ed., *A relation of a voyage to Guiana by Robert Harcourt 1613, with Purchas' transcript of a report made at Harcourt's instance on the Marrawini District*, Hakluyt Society Series II Vol. 60 (1926), (republished Liechtenstein 1967), Appendix II, The "Fisher" report, pp. 172-176.

11 For example: J. Ottens, "Nieuwe kaart van Suriname vertonende de stromen en land-streken van Suriname, Comowini, Cottica, en Marawini, gelegen in Zuid America op de kusten van Caribana 6 grd. benoorden de Linie Equinoct." (New map of Suriname showing the streams and regions of Suriname, Comowini, Cottica, and Marawini, situated in South America on the shores of Caribana 6 grd. North of the Line Equinoct) (Amsterdam, prior to 1718), republished in: C. Koeman ed., *Links with the past*, map 11; F. Staehelin, *Die Mission der Brüdergemeine in Suriname und Berbice im 18. Jahrhundert* (Paramaribo 1913-1919), Vol I, 7-9, and J.C. Heneman, "Kaart van de Colonie Suriname en de onderhoofdige rivieren en districten" (Map of the Colony of Suriname and the rivers and districts in

important overview maps consistently show the same villages, and occasionally specific place-names and designations are given.¹²

Albina

Around 1846 August Kappler, a German officer of the Dutch army, gave the name of Albina to the already existing Kaliña village of **Kuma'ka**, which was situated on the Marowijne River. The name Kuma'ka referred to a big *kankantrie* (kapok) tree on the waterfront. Many people still remember this tree and Albina is still called Kuma'ka by the Kaliña. A statue of the original inhabitants, made by Jozef Klas in 1968, has stood on the site of this *kankantrie* since the eighties.

On 31 December 1861 Kappler obtained the rights from the authorities to the piece of land around Albina. The title under which this land was issued was “allodial ownership and hereditary property”. In those days this was the most frequent land ownership title given to individuals. That did not imply, however, that Kappler had full ownership, or that he could do whatever he wanted with it: various conditions were attached. These included the payment of a type of annual rent (‘recognition’) to the public authorities and the construction of roads and canals. Of particular importance was the condition laid down in article 3:

*That if on the property in question there were found to be Indian settlements, he would at all times respect these, without ever or at any time disturbing such Indians, much less to force them to move from there.*¹³ [unofficial translation]

The precise plot of land was not specified; Kappler was required to make a drawing of the land and submit it at a later stage. Although the authorities had stipulated that Kappler was to respect any indigenous peoples and not enforce their removal, the people of Kuma'ka did, nevertheless, migrate to other indigenous villages further up the river, including the area currently known as Papatam Kondre.

On the other side of the river, on the site of the Kaliña village of **Kamaraguri**, a French penal colony, Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, was established. Trade developed as a result. But a more important development for Albina was the gold mining along the Lawa. The gold seekers, who came in their sailing ships from Paramaribo, would stop in Albina to buy provisions, often paying in gold,



Statue of a group of indigenous people, by Jozef Klas in Albina (Photo: E.R. Kambel)

question) (1784), republished in: C. Koeman ed., *Links with the past*, map 14 A-D.

12 For example: A. Kappler, *Zes jaren in Suriname 1836-1842. Schetsen and taferelen* (Six years in Suriname, Sketches and scenes), Utrecht 1854; republished Zutphen 1983; and A. Kappler, *Nederlandsch-Guyana* (translation from Holländisch – *Guiana, Erlebnisse und Erfahrungen während eines 43 jährigen aufenthalts in der Kolonie Surinam deel I (1842 bis 1846)*, Winterswijk 1883), and Jhr. L.C. van Panhuys, *Kaart van de Beneden-Marowijne, vervaardigd naar de kaart van Suriname door J.F.A. Cateau van Rosevelt en J.E. van Lansberge* (Map of the Lower Marowijne, based on the map of Suriname by J.F.A. Cateau van Rosevelt and J.E. van Lansberge) scale 1:100.000 (1896).

13 A.J.A. Quintus Bosz, *Drie eeuwen grondpolitiek in Suriname. Een historische studie of the achtergrond and the ontwikkeling of the Surinaamse rechten op the grond* (Three centuries of land policy in Suriname, a historical study of the background and the development of the Surinamese rights to land), diss. Groningen) 1954, p. 433.

before they continued in their dug-outs, manned by Maroons, to the gold fields. Albina grew and became increasingly important, so much so that in 1879, the colonial rulers decided to take over the site from Kappler and establish an administrative post. With the creation of the districts in 1894, Albina became the capital of the district of Marowijne and the seat of the District Commissioner.

The Twentieth Century

The 20th century saw a great deal of activity and change along the Marowijne River. The area came into far greater contact with the outside world and Albina grew into a fairly big, busy border post, much like Saint-Laurent. By the end of the 19th century the Moravian Church and the Roman Catholic Church had established missionary stations in the area, and in later years other congregations followed too. Missionary work started playing a role and in some villages churches were built as well as schools and clinics.



Albina, around 1972

Around 1900 bauxite was discovered in Suriname. In 1916, the Suriname Bauxite Company (currently named Suralco), a subsidiary of the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa), started to exploit bauxite in the Cottica region. An area of 123,000 ha. was issued in concession to this company for a period of 60 years. A new town, Moengo, was built, which was to become the second center of Marowijne district.

In the first half of the 20th century, a large coconut plantation was established near Alusiaka, a Kaliña settlement close to the present-day Galibi, and the inhabitants were forced to move to nearby villages (see Chapter 3 about old settlements). In addition, in the sixties the company Bruynzeel Suriname started up logging activities making the Patamacca area (behind Bigiston) the center of a new logging area. A large oil palm enterprise was constructed there as well.

Increasing numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds moved into the area, such as Chinese, as well as Maroons who came from the regions south of Pegoto towards the coast. The Maroons founded new villages south of Albina, some of these on the sites of the old indigenous settlements. Tourism also started to grow. In 1964 the '*Oost-West verbinding*' (East-West link road) was laid, which made it possible to travel by car from Paramaribo to Albina. After the construction of the *Oost-West verbinding* traffic to Albina greatly increased. Many people from Paramaribo would travel to the border to spend a day or a weekend there, attracted by Albina's beautiful beaches or the chance to cross over to French Guiana. Albina became a holiday resort and a large number of hotels and weekend cottages were built along the beaches of Marijkedorp, Pierrekondre and Erowarte. This had the result of forcing the indigenous people to move back from the coast and in some cases losing access to the river.

Nature conservation

The natural resources of Marowijne were also an attraction to biologists: two nature reserves were created, at the Marowijne estuary and along the Atlantic coast, to protect the sea turtles that come there to lay their eggs. The Wiawia Nature Reserve was established in 1961, followed in 1969 by the Galibi Nature Reserve. On 1 January 1986 the Wane Creek Nature Reserve was added, covering a large section of the Lower Marowijne area (see map). These reserves are in areas that were, and are, historically and traditionally used by indigenous peoples. These nature reserves were, however, set up without the permission of, and to a certain extent without even informing the indigenous communities affected. They therefore constitute a source of conflict with the authorities.



Nature Reserves Lower Marowijne area:
 1–Galibi Nature Reserve; 2–Wia-Wia Nature Reserve;
 6 –Wane Creek Nature reserve
 (Source: Stinasu)

The civil war

In 1986 a civil war broke out, being a struggle between the guerilla group (the Jungle Commando) led by Maroons, against the military regime under the leadership of army leader Bouterse. Later on the indigenous group, the Tucajana Amazonas, joined in and the struggle changed into an ethnic conflict between the indigenous communities and the Maroons. The Jungle Commando was based at Stoelmanseiland (an island) in the Marowijne River and as a consequence most of the fighting took place in the district of Marowijne. During this war everything that had been built up was destroyed. A large part of Albina was burned down and schools, clinics and government buildings were destroyed or looted. The people became dispersed, many of them moving to safer havens such as French Guiana and Paramaribo. Almost everything, including tourism, ground to a halt. The road too suffered greatly from the violence of the war, being damaged in many places, and bridges were destroyed. In 1992 the war was formally ended by the signing of the Lelydorp Peace Accord.

Now that the war has come to an end, rebuilding is taking place little by little. Albina's restoration has begun. Houses are once more being built and people are starting to return to their homes. Tourism is also picking up. The war caused an economic decline in the area, which is still evident, and heavy unemployment.¹⁴ According to a recent report a large sector of the population is still suffering from trauma and showing signs of psychosomatic, psychological and behavioral problems that are directly related to the experiences and the tensions of the war.¹⁵ There is no sanctuary or counseling for the ex-refugees or the ex-armed fighters.

¹⁴ Henna Guicherit, *Maawina Pikin. Situatie Analyse van kinderen in district Marowijne. In opdracht van het ministerie van Regionale ontwikkeling, gefinancierd door UNICEF* (Situation Analysis of children in the district of Marowijne. By order of the Ministry of Regional Development, funded by UNICEF), Paramaribo, December 2002, p. 11

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 19.

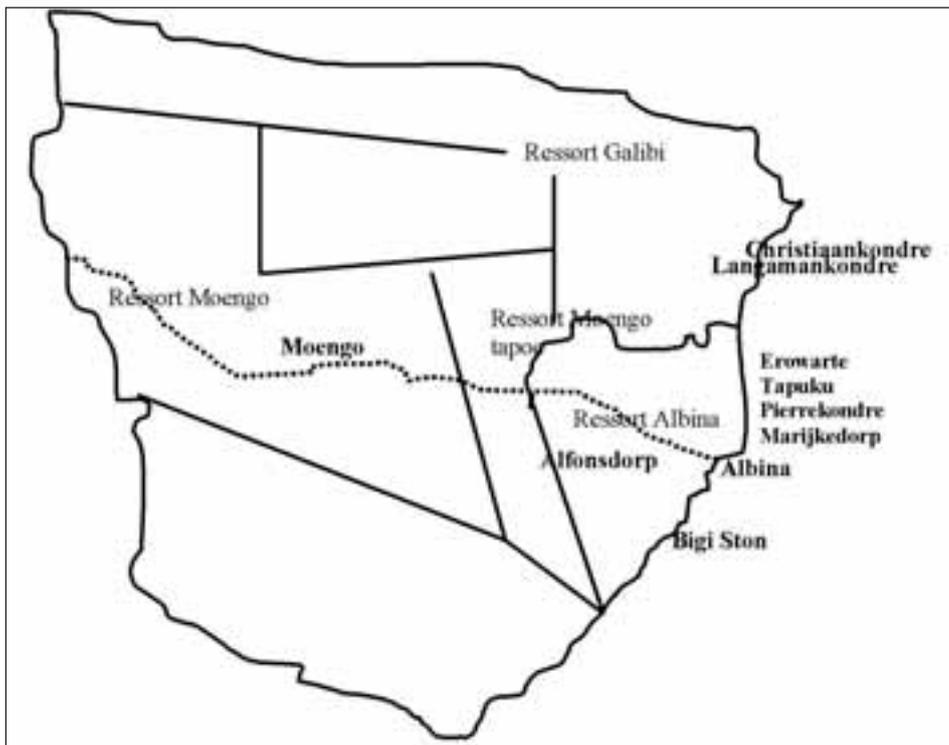
Administration of the district of Marowijne

On paper, Suriname's administration is decentralized, with each district having its own administrative body. The district of Marowijne too has its own district administration headed by the District Commissioner (DC) who is appointed by the President. Furthermore, each district is divided into administrative constituencies with a local council, whose members are directly elected by the residents of the district. The district of Marowijne, with an area of 4,627 km² and about 15,000 inhabitants, comprises six administrative constituencies.

As the map below shows, the division of the constituencies took no account of the indigenous villages and their own administrative structures. The indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne come under the administrative constituencies of Galibi and Albina, whereas part of the hunting and the fishing grounds behind Alfonsdorp and Bigiston potentially come under the administrative constituencies of Moengo Tapoe and Patamaka. This causes confusion and conflict because each village already has its own village authority consisting of the village leader and two or more village assistants. Traditionally they have responsibility for enforcing peace and order in the community and represent the village in matters relating to the government and other outsiders. Although in practice the government installs the village leaders and provides them with a monthly allowance, the village authorities are not legally recognized (see Chapter 9).

Box 1.1 Maroons in the district of Marowijne

Not long after the arrival of the Europeans the first slaves, who escaped from the plantations in Commewijne to the Marowijne area also arrived. They formed their own communities with their own authority structure. The presence of the maroons who regularly attacked the plantations in search of food, goods and new recruits (especially women) was deeply felt, especially in the coastal area. In order to protect themselves the planters built a line of military posts that ran from Joden-Savanne up to behind Galibi and was called the Cordonpad (path). Regularly old pots, bottles and other remains from this period were found. At present the Maroons live around the Cottica-river (Aukaners) and along the Marowijne River (Paramakaners, Aukaners and Aluku's) and they are the biggest population group of the district of Marowijne. After the war in the interior (1986-1992) various Maroon villages were established in the indigenous area from Albina to the south.



Administrative constituency of the district of Marowijne
(Source: Guicherit 2002, p. 7)

Infrastructure and facilities

The public amenities in the district of Marowijne are concentrated in Albina and Moengo. The roads here are paved, there is electricity and running water, as well as all the government services, such as police, schools, clinics and a social and civil service office. Albina is also an important trade center, with a market where vegetables, fruit and other products are sold and where people from the entire area can shop.



The waterfront at Albina
(Photo: K. Neke)

Albina is by far the most important of the indigenous villages. People only visit Moengo for the technical school established there, and the secondary school (see below). The villages of Marijkedorp, Pierrekondre, Erowarte and Tapuku in particular are largely dependent on the facilities offered by Albina, such as education and health care. Marijkedorp and Pierrekondre are virtually next to Albina and the villagers can reach it on foot or by bike. To get to the more distant villages of Tapuku and Erowarte (one-and-a-half hours by foot), people rely on being given a lift. Although the laterite road is in reasonably good condition, there are no public buses that go to the villages.

The people of Christiaankondre and Langamankondre have to rely on boats; it costs about 20 SRD for the two-hour ride to Albina. Bigiston is about one hour away by boat.

There are private buses from Albina to Paramaribo daily and for only 30 SRD one can be in town within two hours. There is also a public bus that costs 7.50 SRD. However, this takes four hours due to the many stops.

Education

There are three primary schools in Albina: a public school, a Roman-Catholic school and a Moravian Church school for the children from Alfonsdorp, Marijkedorp, Pierrekondre and Tapuku. The children from Erowarte, Christiaankondre, Langamankondre and Bigiston have primary schools in their own villages. In Alfonsdorp only the first and second grades of primary school are catered for. For the senior grades the children have to go to school in Albina.

Although officially the government does not charge school fees, parents are obliged to pay a parental contribution in the form of an entry fee. This differs substantially from school to school. The public school and the Moravian Church school charge 10 SRD per child, whereas the Roman Catholic school charges 50 SRD. In addition, the children have to wear a uniform which costs the parents about 100 SRD per child. For families with many children, the cost of education consequently runs very high.

In Albina the children can attend the first two classes of the LBGO (Junior vocation-oriented education) and the MULO (Junior secondary general education). They can complete their secondary schooling in Moengo. The school bus that transports the children from Albina to Moengo costs 2.50 SRD per month, but is regularly out of order, sometimes for up to two weeks. If the authorities do not pay, the bus does not operate at all. In this event the parents have to charter a taxi costing 100 SRD. A biology teacher in Moengo made the following comment about the bus transport:

This is also where the Ministry fails. Every day they put 51 pupils in a clapped-out bus intended for 44 passengers. This means that many pupils have to stand for an hour or share a small seat between three of them. And this is ten times a week. It's always a real battle to get a seat. Again this shows that the Ministry doesn't take the rights of the child seriously at all.¹⁶

Parents who prefer their children to get higher education in Paramaribo either have to get accommodation for their children with relatives or in boarding schools which cost about 150 SRD a month. Places are limited and the costs mean that very few families have this opportunity.

Table 1.2 Education and health facilities per village

	Primary school	School type	Clinic	Piay
Christiaankondre/ Langamankondre	Yes	Roman Catholic	Yes	Yes (7)
Erowarte	Yes	7th-day Adventists	Not yet open	No longer
Tapuku	Albina		Not yet open	No longer
Pierrekondre			No	Yes (2)
Marijkedorp			No	No
Alfonsdorp	(Up to 2nd grade)	Roman Catholic	Does not function	Yes (4)
Bigiston	Yes	Public	Yes, but does not function	

Schooling is conducted solely in Dutch, although this is not the language spoken by most children at home. In Langamankondre, Christiaankondre and Bigiston Kaliña is mainly spoken, while the other villages speak Kaliña and/or Sranan.¹⁷ The curriculum takes no account of the indigenous lifestyle and strictly follows the curriculum developed and taught in town. On the other hand, teachers who teach in the interior are not required to have the same qualification as those in town and are able to teach courtesy of the so-called 'Boslandakte'.¹⁸ The result is that the children quickly fall behind and are not given the opportunity to learn their own indigenous language and knowledge well. (See Chapter 10).

Health care

Since the civil war the regional hospital located in Albina has only provided a clinic under the management of the Regional Health Department (RGD). For hospital admissions it is necessary to go to Paramaribo. Nor is dental care available in Albina. Medicines can be obtained from the RGD pharmacy and are paid for by the national health insurance fund (SZF). They are, however, often unavailable and people have to rely on a private drugstore that also serves as a pharmacy. The hospital in St. Laurent, on the other side of the river, provides an alternative for those who can afford it.

Many indigenous people have at their disposal great knowledge of medicinal plants. These are used as first aid for less serious diseases or if a visit to the doctor does not help. In addition, in some villages there is the opportunity to visit a *piay* (shaman) who can heal a patient with the help of the spiritual world (see Chapter 9 on this topic).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44

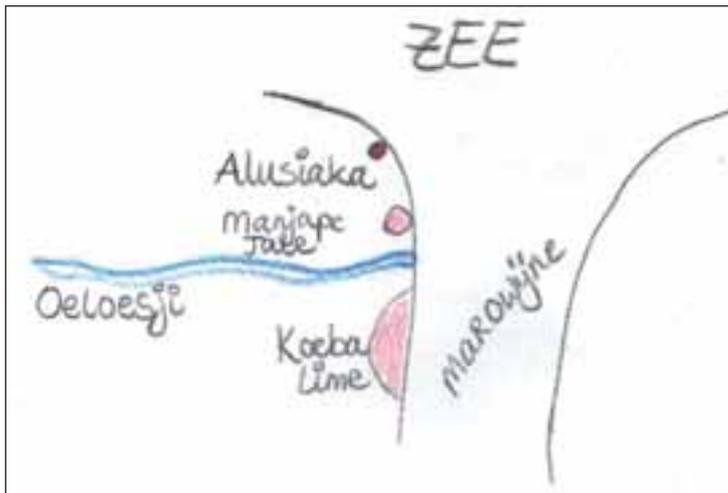
¹⁷ Lokono is rarely spoken in Marijkedorp and Alfonsdorp.

¹⁸ This certificate is awarded after only nine months' training and no high school diploma is required in order to take the course.

Chapter 2 The indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne

Christiaankondre

Christiaankondre was previously known as **Koebalime**, the name given to it by the first inhabitants, because at that place there were many *koebali's* (signs). Koebalime is situated near where the Myrisji Lodge now stands, virtually the northernmost point of Christiaankondre. North of this (on the other side of Oeloesji Creek) is where the village formerly known as **Manjapejale** was situated. The village acquired the name Manjapejale because in the surrounding area there were many agricultural plots and Manjapejale means “beach of the agricultural plots” or “waterfront of the agricultural plots”. Above this site, on the estuary of the river, was where **Alusiaka** was located.



Koebalime (Christiaankondre)
(Illustration by S. Oeloekanamoe)

Christiaankondre was named after Christiaan Pané, although it is not an established fact that he was the founder of the village. Some say that it was his father, Imaniwapo Pané, who established the new settlement in **Manjapejale**. Another version, however, is that the first inhabitants came from French Guiana, from a place called **Mana Apotele** (“the bend near the Mana”). That had been a big village in the past, on the other side of the present **Awala** (so called because of the many awarra palm trees).

In any event, Christiaankondre village came into existence before the twentieth century. In the past it was more forested than at present; it was also considerably smaller. At first, people only lived close to the waterfront. Their agricultural plots were further inland. At this time, people were often troubled by angry spirits that entered the village as well as water spirits who caused the water to become increasingly rough and more and more of the waterfront was swept away. Nowadays the people live further from the shore; some live on their former agricultural plots rather than along the river bank. They still have agricultural plots behind the village. The village is also getting bigger and bigger. This is because everyone now tends to live separately instead of together in blocs as was the case in the past.¹⁹



The waterfront at Christaankondre
(Photo: K. Neke)

¹⁹ *Verhalen uit de mondelinge geschiedenis van de inheemse dorpen in het Beneden-Marowijnegebied* (Stories from the oral history of the indigenous villages in the Lower Marowijne area). Recorded by Sylvia Oeloekanamoe as part of the 2000 Lower Marowijne demarcation project, collated by Caroline de Jong, VIDS (Paramaribo, 2005).

Langamankondre

The indigenous name for Langamankondre is **Karawasjie Oende**, because there used to be a big *karawasjie* tree on the site of the village. This is a tree with long, narrow leaves and yellow flowers. The current name comes from Mr. Majana'we, father of the late Captain Mariwajoe. He was a tall man (*lange man*) and was given the nickname by his guests or friends. In the meantime the *karawasjie* had been cut down. Captain Mariwajoe then named the village Langamankondre, after his father. The name gained popularity although in the Kaliña language the village is still called Karawasjie Oende.



Langamankondre seen from the Marowijne River
(Photo: K. Neke)

Some say that the Lokono were the first to live at Karawasjie Oende. Mr. Majanawe (Langaman) came there later with his son to settle and they cleared the village site further. Others, however, say that the village was founded by Mr. Airidja, the father of Langaman. He lived in **Kwasjie**, in the environs of Mana (French Guyana). On one occasion he came into the area to hunt and liked the place so much that he told his wife that he wanted to go and live there. They then went and cleared the area and set up shelters and so the village was created.

In the past the village was small and there were no roads. The village lay along the waterfront only; behind it was wooded. Nowadays the village is bigger, some of the woodland has been cleared and the people have set up their shelters further inland. The school has brought about many changes. After primary school the children go to Albina or to the town for secondary education. Alternatively they go to French Guiana or the Netherlands. Many youngsters do not return. During the civil war many people from Langamankondre fled to the other side of the river. The village now seems much smaller.

Previously, Captain Mariwajoe was captain both of what is now Langamankondre and Christiaankondre. There were many conflicts and eventually, in the sixties, it was decided to appoint two separate village leaders. Ernest Aloema became the village leader of Christiaankondre.

Current situation in Galibi

Nowadays both Christiaankondre and Langamankondre have their own village leaders but there is close cooperation in the areas of economic activity, utilities, education and health care. To outsiders, the villages are known as Galibi. About 500 people live in Christiaankondre and about 300 in Langamankondre.

The two villages share a school located exactly midway between them. The Saint Antonius School (Roman Catholic) is an infant school and a primary school with 154 pupils taught by 11 teachers, almost all of whom, except for the head, come from Galibi. At the infant school they speak Kaliña, after which Dutch is the language of instruction. The school has recently been renovated with the help of the European Union's Micro Project facility.

There is also a recently built clinic in the village, staffed full-time by a nurse, who also lives in Galibi. Once a month a doctor is supposed to give consultations, but in reality he does not come every month. Another problem is the fact that there are hardly any medicines, which makes it difficult for the nurse to do his job. In addition to the “western” health care, the inhabitants of Galibi sometimes go to the *piay*. In total seven *piays* are active in Galibi.



**The recently renovated school at Galibi
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Nowadays there is less and less need for Galibi’s residents to go to Albina; there is a supermarket in Galibi where people can buy foodstuffs, beer and soft drinks, as well as clothes and DVDs. Furthermore, there are two bakeries where fresh bread can be bought every day.

The authorities have established various services in Galibi: the Ministry of Regional Development (with a district secretary and two local administrators) and Social Affairs where one can apply for AOV (old age pension). Births and deaths can also be registered with the local administrator, so it is no longer necessary to go to Albina. This service comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

There are various churches in Galibi. There are two branches of the “*Volle Evangelie*” church and also a Baptist and a Roman Catholic church.

The Ministry of Natural Resources provides electricity through a diesel generator, but due to the scarcity of diesel the power is only on between 7 and 11 pm. All the houses have electricity which has to be paid for by the inhabitants. Although there have been various initiatives to install running water, none of the the projects has been successful. Well water is, therefore, still used and in the rainy season, rainwater.

Economic activities

Every year hundreds of tourists, mainly from the Netherlands, come to the sandy beaches of Galibi to watch the sea turtles laying their eggs. For some years now, tourism has been an important source of income for the villagers who transport tourists from Albina to Galibi and for a number of women who sell necklaces, bracelets and other handicrafts to the tourists. In the women’s center the tourists can, for example, buy ornaments and pottery made by the indigenous women (see Chapter 7). This center also accommodates a small information center about Galibi which provides, amongst other things, information about the indigenous peoples as well as the turtles. A few inhabitants run a guest house where tourists can stay for a few days.



**The Galibi women’s center also serves as a
tourist information center
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Galibi is, however, still mainly a fishing community. Fish is sold fresh, dry or salted at the markets in St. Laurent and Albina. There is less hunting, but hunters from Galibi do try to sell game in St. Laurent. Recently they have been increasingly active in agriculture, in particular cultivating cassava. They make *atyupo* (‘*peprewatra*’ or hot soup), *kasiriepio*, *kasiri* (cassava beer) and cassava bread, which is mostly sold in St. Laurent.

Finally, Galibi is the only village in the Lower Marowijne area to have its own radio station. The broadcasts are in the evenings and are mostly conducted in the Kaliña language. In addition to playing music, excerpts are read from the newspapers, village announcements are made and the listeners can send messages. The reception area covers Galibi to Bigiston and the indigenous villages on the French side can also listen to “Radio Galibi”. The studio building also has a multimedia room, and internet access has recently been established.



The “Radio Galibi” studio and the computer room (Photos: C. de Jong)

Erowarte

The indigenous name of Erowarte is **Ero Wate**. This means: “this is the right spot”. It has since been corrupted to Erowarte. One of the first Kaliña inhabitants, named Erowanaï, lived there with the Lokono indigenous people. In the past the village has been abandoned more than once. The first occasion was after a wood-chopping accident in which a Lokono man died. It is customary for the Lokono and the Kaliña to leave a place if bad things, such as death, disease or accidents take place. Many Lokono moved to **Kanawa** (in the forest a long way behind the village). Later, some Kaliña returned, but when Erowanaï died, the remaining villagers headed towards **Oelapa** (the second part of Tapuku), because they felt isolated in Ero Wate. Some time later, Erowanaï’s descendants, who had been living in **Galibi** and **Maripande** (in the area around **Papatam-kondre**), decided once again to clear the place that Erowanaï had founded. One of them was Alfons Moetoeloewai. At that time a fight arose within the village and it was again abandoned. Moetoeloewai’s descendants later founded the village of **Paddock** in French Guiana. Fifty years ago Mr. Richinel Amo Voorthuizen, grandfather of the current village leader (Gunther), returned to Erowarte. A major agricultural project was set up and Erowarte became the first big agricultural area of the region. Javanese contract workers came from Moengo. Then the Seventh-day Adventists came and built a church, a school and a road. Before the civil war many families lived there, but not any longer.”²⁰

Current situation in Erowarte

At present, Erowarte has 125 inhabitants. In the past it was a big village with a lot of houses and agricultural plots along the river. The numerous mango trees remind us of that time. After the war, many people did not return to Erowarte. Now, many of the people living there are not originally from the village.

The village church is Seventh-day Adventist. The Iporoman (“the truth”) School was also founded by the Seventh-day Adventists in 1963. It was *Dominee* (Reverend) Brinkman who set up the school and saw that the road was built. Children can now be educated from infant school up to the sixth grade. About 50 pupils attend the school and there are two teachers and one assistant.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Since the civil war there is no longer a clinic in the village. When the NDP was in power, the people were promised that a clinic would be built for use both by the inhabitants of Tapuku and Erowarte. Building work had started, but half-way through, another government took office and the project was discontinued. The people are really keen to complete the clinic, but there is a lack of materials and money. For health care they have to rely on the clinic at Albina or go to French Guiana. The village no longer has a *piay*. The last *piay* passed away quite a while ago.



The Iporoman school at Erowarte
(Photo: C. de Jong)

The village has electricity 24 hours a day. With the exception of a few houses, all have electricity. They have a water supply system and a water supply that has to provide both Tapuku and Erowarte with water. The water supply, however, has been defective since the war. The pump was repaired after the peace agreement, but the water tank was not replaced so rust gets into the water and the motor breaks down. The system has been unuseable for years, which is why the people now have to rely on water from the well and on rainwater.

Most people in Erowarte live off fishing, agricultural plots and hunting. Some residents have permanent employment with the government (Regional Development) and fish or hunt after work. There is some tourism in the village. The captain has a recreational site along the beach (“Love Beach”), where day trippers in particular come to swim and relax. They can also camp if they want to. The tourists do not come into the village itself. There are also boat builders, and others who do basketwork and woodcarving, both for their own use and for sale.



Beach near Erowarte
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Erowarte has a women’s association. At present the association is working on a project submitted to the CDFS (Community Development Fund Suriname), for a new school building. The association has also submitted a project to the SFOB (*Stichting Fonds Ontwikkeling Binnenland*, Fund for the Development of the Interior) for a new water supply. In addition, they have started planting cashew trees in an area they cleared in the forest behind the village. The intention is to sell the nuts and the juice and to use the proceeds for the community. From time to time a *moshiro* is organized to do the weeding. (See Chapter 4).

According to its inhabitants Erowarte was formerly one of the best known, largest and most developed places in the area. There were, for example, a bakery and a furniture maker's. There was also an agricultural school at which members of the Ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry taught from 1975 until the beginning of the war. During the war all the tools and machinery were stolen. The building currently serves as teachers' accommodation.



Erowarte's former agricultural school
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Tapuku

The indigenous name of the village of Tapuku is **Apotele** ("bend"), because it is on a sharp bend. The current name, "Tapuku", also means bend, but in Surinamese (Sranan Tongo). They say that one of the founders, whose name was Solopa, originally lived in Galibi but because of conflicts with his son-in-law, Sjagirijale, founded a new village and named it Apotele. At first the village of Apotele was right on the waterfront. At that time it was still small and the people lived very close together. But more and more space was cut open and cleared and as a consequence the village grew and people now have more space and do not live so close together. At present people are moving further inland, all the more so since the war. Moreover, due to the fighting during the war very many people moved away and became dispersed. The majority have gone to French Guiana and have no wish to return.

The second section of Tapuku was and still is named **Oelapa** (Oelapa is a kind of wood). This is some distance away but is still part of Tapuku. This place was founded by a certain Grandpa Kokolosjie. Later on others joined him, but after a time they left for French Guiana, for **Yalimapo** and **Paddock**. Grandpa Kokolosjie remained alone and after he passed away was buried there. It was a long time before others went there and made it habitable once more, which is how it has remained to this day.

Before the war Erowarte and Tapuku came under one village authority (that of Erowarte). After 1992 Tapuku got its own village leader.

Current situation in Tapuku

Tapuku has 129 inhabitants. There were more before the war but many former inhabitants have not yet returned from French Guiana. They are doing well there and get support from the government. There are now many empty houses in Tapuku, but if something is organized in the village or if help is needed, the people now living in French Guiana do mostly come back to their village.

Tapuku does not have its own school; the children go either to Erowarte or Albina, or to French Guiana. During the civil war many of the older children went to school in French Guiana and are now completing their education there. Every day their parents have to take them across the river to their school. The children are dropped off at 7 in the morning and are picked up again at 12 o'clock. They then go back at half past one to be picked up again at 5 o'clock. This amounts to SRD 50 a day. Some of the parents do not have a boat but the people in the village help each other out. They receive no compensation for their travel expenses. They therefore do a great deal of fishing in order to earn money. The youngsters who only started school after the war are educated in Erowarte or Albina.

The clinic at the junction of Erowarte and Tapuku, which to date remains incomplete, was intended as a medical facility for both Tapuku and Erowarte. In the meantime the inhabitants of Tapuku have to go to Albina for medical assistance. Before the war there was a *piay* in the village, but now there is not even one.



Erowarte and Tapuku's unfinished clinic
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Electricity is available to the people in Tapuku the entire day, although not all houses have access to electricity yet. Electricity had already been installed before the war. As for the water supply, the situation is the same as in Erowarte: in principle there is a water mains, but the system does not work so, consequently, the well and rainwater have to be relied on.

The people of Tapuku no longer have many agricultural plots. Fishing is the most important activity and fish is also the main form of subsistence. The residents fish in the river, the creeks and the swamps. Hunting is a less frequent occupation. Some have a permanent job (one of the *basja's*, for example, is a nurse in Albina). A local administrator is also employed in the village.



The village has a Roman Catholic church. An active youth association, named "*jongerenvereniging* (youth association) *Apotele*", plays different kinds of sports, such as "*slagbal*" similar to rounders). Tapuku has a soccer field and its own soccer team ("Tapuku boys"), and since March 2005 has had a beach volleyball site where other sports tournaments can also be held.

Beach volleyball field, Tapuku
(Photo: C. de Jong)

The village authorities have submitted a project to build a hall near the soccer field. There are also plans for tourism, such as building beach shelters where guests can spend the day or the evening.

Bambusi is a residential area situated between Pierrekondre and Tapuku. The Kaliña were the first to live here; they later abandoned it and the Lokono moved in. William Shimara Jubitana was the first inhabitant and his descendants still live here. He came with his family from Powaka. They later went to Surnau and then to Bambusi. There is an old graveyard in Bambusi. In the past there were many more people, but in the fifties they moved to French Guiana because they were offered the chance to engage in animal husbandry there. A number of them went to **Balaté**, others to **Paddock**. After the war in 1994 Mr. Theo Sabajo, a son of William Shimara and Marietje Kabara Sabajo, returned to Bambusi to open it up again and to live there. Now five families live there. Bambusi has never had a captain and comes under the village Tapuku authority.



Mr. and Mrs. Sabajo, descendants of William Shimara Jubitana from Bambusi
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Pierrekondre

The indigenous name of Pierrekondre is **Sjimirinde**, named after a *sjimiri* tree (a forest fruit) that was on that spot on the waterfront. The founder of Pierrekondre was Adankuna. Later on, they called him Pierre. He was a *piay*. He came in the first half of the twentieth century with his brothers from an indigenous village on the Cottica River (**Agiti Ondro**). He lived with a woman from **Iracoubo** (K. **Iragoe**, French Guiana). To this day there are still many inhabitants there named Pierre. At first only families that had founded the village lived there. Later, people from other villages joined them, such as those from Galibi, and also from Wit Santi and Bernharddorp in the district of Para. In the beginning the village was small and wooded and the people lived along the waterfront. Pierrekondre has now grown. On the northern boundary lies **Bambusie**, on the southern side, Marijkedorp. The people now live away from the riverbank, further inland. This spot is named **Oesiewara**. There is an airstrip between Sjimirinde and Oesiewara. During the civil war most of Pierrekondre's inhabitants settled on the French side. Many of them do not want to come back. The places where they used to live have now become reforested. In the past – but also now from time to time – there have been outsiders, non-indigenous people, who (wanted to and have) settled in the village. The plots of land were issued by the government. One example is Mr. Findlay (see Chapter 10 on the subdivision of land and the issue of individual titles to outsiders).



Soccer field, Pierrekondre
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

The current situation in Pierrekondre

About 45 families live in Pierrekondre. There is no school in the village. Children from Pierrekondre go to school in Albina; they have to walk at least three-quarters of an hour. There is also no clinic or church. There is a big soccer field, however, which also has a room where one can play pool or table football.



There is also an official village hall on the waterfront. They want to develop a project to expand part of it and build toilets. Pierrekondre has a women's association and a youth (sports) association. There is electricity the whole day through, with the exception of the newest houses that have been built at the back of the village. There is also tap water, but there are only two public taps in the village (one near **Sjimirinde** and the other near **Oesiewara**). This is not sufficient. People get additional water from the well or use rainwater. A project has been submitted to the SFOB to extend the tap water facilities.

Large amounts of *buskandra* are gathered for sale
by the inhabitants of Pierrekondre
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Ever since the civil war, trade has become the most important means of subsistence (previously it was agriculture). Nowadays the people sell all kinds of products, such as forest fruits, for example *maripa*, awarra palm and *podosiri*, as well as home-grown fruits, such as mango, lemon, orange, avocado, papaya, watermelon and *pomme de citère*. They also sell chicken. Cotton and *buskandra* (combustible tree resin) are also sold a lot in Saint-Laurent. Some people still grow crops, particularly cassava. They rely on hunting and fishing to a lesser extent. Just a few make pottery. There is no tourism in Pierrekondre.

Marijkedorp

Before **Marijkedorp** (or **Wan Shi Sha**) was founded along the Marowijne River, the people had been living in the Wane Creek area for a long time. Many of the people who lived there originally came from Cassewinica (Commewijne) and also from Upper Suriname (the district of Para) and West Suriname. In the Wane Creek area there were different settlements such as **Kerki Kondre**, **Tingimoni (Petruksondre)**, **Prasarakondre**, **Bethlehemkondre** and **Sarasara Nesi**. **Kerkikondre** had a church, a school, a soccer field, a graveyard and for the people who were ill there was a *semichichi* (shaman).

At the Wane Creek estuary there was a police station, established there because of all the smuggling that took place, especially by the Maroons who would try to get all the way to French Guiana from Upper Suriname via the Commewijne, through Cottica and finally through Wane Creek. The people living in Wane Creek live off their agricultural plots, hunting, fishing, *balata* (rubber) tapping and logging.



The Wane Creek estuary
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Around 1930 an epidemic broke out known as “the Spanish flu”. A lot of people became ill and died, and so the inhabitants moved to **Mooi Wane**, **Anjoemarakondre** and other villages along the Marowijne River. People were already living on the right-

hand branch and the upper course of Anjoemara Creek, having come there from Wane Creek years before the epidemic, which is how Marijkedorp was established. It was previously named Anjoemarakondre. Alfonsdorp was also created by the inhabitants who came from Wane Creek.

According to other inhabitants of Marijkedorp, the people from Wane Creek moved to Marijkedorp in particular because there was no school in the Wane Creek area for children over the age of six, nor was there a doctor or other medical facilities. They were isolated.

In the past there was a footpath from Marijkedorp over the Anjoemara Bridge to Albina. Later on, a paved road was built. As a result, the people who had been living along the river had to move hundreds of metres further back. This was done under the leadership of Captain Jozef Watamaleo. After the road had been made, the government started to parcel out plots and these were sold to third parties. In 1975 Anjoemara Creek was dug out to form a canal. Older inhabitants of Marijkedorp still remember that the creek had been full of fish, but they say that since the canal was dug there are no longer so many fish.

Marijkedorp today

Like Alfonsdorp, Marijkedorp is one of the two Lokono communities in Lower Marowijne. The number of inhabitants is recorded as 287. Access to the village is by road. From town one comes first to Albina. As there is no school in the village, the children go to school in Albina; this takes them about 15 minutes on foot. Also, for medical care, the people go to the clinic in Albina.

In principle there is an electricity supply the whole day through. Marijkedorp also has piped water, although not everyone in the village has been connected to the system.

In addition to the captain, the village administration (sworn in, in 1993) still has three *basia's*. The women's association, the Hiamawa Foundation, is very active. One project they have already completed was to extend the recreation hall by adding a library and toilets. The women's organization currently has a project in progress with the UNDP/GEF-SGP with regard to ecotourism and sustainable management of the Wane Creek area. In addition, they are working on an application for a sustainable forestry project. There is also a youth organization which is particularly involved with sports. Furthermore, there is an organization for elderly people (60+), which does handicrafts (basketwork).



Marijkedorp's recreation hall
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Since May 2005 CLIM's office has also been accommodated in the Marijkedorp hall. The office had its official opening on August 7, 2005.

Alfonsdorp

The name "Alfons" came from Mr. Alfons Karwafodi, also known as "Pa Kroroeman" (the man with curly hair). His Lokono name was Makarikoro, which also means "man with curly hair". Pa Alfons was a great *piay*. The inhabitants lived in several places before definitively settling in Alfonsdorp. Everyone in Alfonsdorp, just like the people in Marijkedorp, originally came from the Wane Creek area. Pa Alfons lived at **Sara Sara Nesi**. Wane Creek was, as mentioned in Marijkedorp's oral history, abandoned after the outbreak of Spanish flu and also because of the lack of educational facilities. There was also a great drought as a result of which the water in the river was very low and the people were unable to reach Albina by boat. To get to Albina, they had to go through the forest and then by road. Only men could cover this distance. Consequently the people had to move. They went and lived at the confluence of the Wane Creek and Mooi Wana (**Owru Kondre**), after which they moved to **Baka Boesie**.



In 1936 Mr. Karwafodi and others from Wane Creek went to **Owroe Kondre** along Moiwana Creek, a branch of Wane Creek. About 350 people lived there. Eventually they also left **Mooi Wane**. This was because of the lack of medical provisions. By World War II, around 1940, both Wane Creek and Mooi Wane were deserted. Thereafter the people lived for a while in old Alfonsdorp (**Baka Busi**), three kilometres deeper into the forest than the current village. Finally in 1951, at the insistence of two commissioners from Albina, they settled on the Weyneweg. When, a while later, the District Commissioner from Albina saw that a number of indigenous shelters had been set up on this spot, he had

"Grandpa Blanca", one of the elders of Alfonsdorp
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

a sign put up with the name of Mr. Alfons Karwafodi, as he was the eldest inhabitant. This is how the name Alfonsdorp came into being. Other families who have been living in Alfonsdorp from the beginning are the families of Jubitana, Ligorie and Watamaleo. The Sabajo and Blanca families came later.

A well known place is **Neger Creek**, along the edge of the village. People have always lived there and the Biswane's were the first. In the beginning many people were ill; they suffered from severe diarrhea. Then the government had a water supply installed. There was also the clinic in Alfonsdorp and the children could go to school there. There was electricity as well. After the civil war there were a lot of changes. Almost everyone moved out. Many people fled to French Guiana and to Paramaribo.

Alfonsdorp today

At present about 285 people live in Alfonsdorp. This is the only indigenous village in the Lower Marowijne that is not situated along the river, but at the Oost-Westverbinding (east-west connecting road) between Paramaribo and Albina, and is consequently easily accessed by car.

The village administration was sworn in on July 1, 2000. The women's organization, the Rosalina Foundation, is very active in the village. Because of this organization's legal personality it has formal responsibility for various projects in Alfonsdorp (see below).



**The school (left) and the new clinic (right) in Alfonsdorp
(Photos: C. de Jong)**

There is also a youth association named “Ebelino” (“We youngsters from Alfonsdorp”) and a soccer association called “Wadilikano”. A dependency of the (Roman Catholic) Saint Gerardus School at Albina has been established in Alfonsdorp, which can accommodate infants and pupils in the first and second grades. Thereafter they have to go to Albina. Suralco, the Ministry of Regional Development and Unicef have contributed to the construction materials for the school and playground.

Recently the village has opened up a new area, where a new community center has been built. In due course other facilities such as a sports field will be established. A new clinic has also been built, although it has not opened as yet. Until such time the village will continue to use the facilities in Albina. There are four *piays* in Alfonsdorp. There is a Roman Catholic church, which is on the site where the founder of the current Alfonsdorp used to live. Once a month a mass is held; a priest comes from town and also goes to Albina. Members of the “Volle Evangelie” and the Baptist congregation attend their own services in Albina.

Almost all the houses in Alfonsdorp have electricity in the evening. Thanks to the CDFS project tap water has been available for some months now. But rainwater and water from the creek is still used.

The inhabitants of Alfonsdorp live mainly from hunting and agriculture. The produce from their agricultural plots, such as cassava starch and kasiripo, are sold. Some of Alfonsdorp's male population have permanent jobs in Albina. Fishing and logging are only done on a small scale. There are plans, however, to develop eco-tourism at Wane Creek.

In addition to the clinic other joint village projects are a cashew project (2 ha, the proceeds of which go to the village) and a project that has since been approved by the SFOB for the building of a brick works. This factory, that is still to be built, will create employment for about 25 people from the village.

Bigston



Bigston
(Photo: K. Neke)

The indigenous name for Bigston is **Temeren**, which means “written”, in reference to the big rock in the river on which incisions (petroglyphs) can be seen (see Chapter 1). It is said that it was the ancestors who left their writing on the rock in the river. Others say it was the man-eater who did this. According to legend, very long ago a spirit once appeared as a white man. He came from the east and people think that he came from Brazil. His name was Pairandepo (that is the tribe of the purple heart tree). He came with his dogs and hunted the indigenous people who then fled and went into hiding. Those who did not flee in time were eaten by the white spirit. He then made the symbols on the rock: two mouths, his own face and a picture of his dog.

The village of Bigston has existed for over 100 years. The founder of the village was Talokoewa. He first lived at **Apauwa Oende**, or **Apaw oende**, which he founded on the site of an *apauwa* tree. The people who lived there also had agricultural plots at Temeren. Later, Talokoewa settled in **Temeren** and became the village leader. There were a few places in the vicinity of **Temeren** where indigenous people also lived and which can still be seen. Some of

these are still used, such as **Mopénde**, where there was a big *mope* (hog plum) tree; **Emetale**, (“inlet”); **Awarabate** or **Awarapate**, where there were many awarra palm trees; and **Kwamande** or **Kwama Oende**, a place full of *kwama* (bamboo). So the people lived in a variety of small places. These are all now called **Bigston**, which is Surinamese for “big stone”.

In the beginning, **Temeren** did not yet have many inhabitants: a mere handful. After further clearing had taken place and it had been made beautiful by the first inhabitants, more and more people came to join them. At one time Temeren had a large number of inhabitants who lived mainly along the waterfront; the rest of the terrain was heavily wooded. Gradually it was opened up. The people lived in (communal) blocs. Nowadays there are not so many people. Once the civil war had ended very few came back. Many of the inhabitants had left for French Guiana. They are now in **Belle-Vue**, **Esperance**, **Village-Pierre**, **Terre Rouge** and **Paddock**. Some, however, did come back to build homes.

Captain Talokoewa also founded other places, such as **Maripa**, **Makelei** and **Atakali**. These are just beyond the bend as you go towards Albina in the locality of **Papatamkondre**, where many Maroons now live. The people from **Bigiston** initially lived there as well. A significant change is that Maroons now live in Bigiston as well. They share the village, the forest and the river.

Bigiston in the present day

Bigiston has a total of 250 inhabitants, 75 of whom are indigenous people and the rest Maroons (*Aukaners*). The most important means of subsistence are hunting, fishing, agriculture (vegetables are grown too, mainly for subsistence purposes). A few residents keep chickens and sell the eggs at the market. Bigiston is also renowned for boat building. Both here and more especially on the French side, wana wood can still be found (see Chapter 8 on logging). In addition, they make pottery and basketwork for sale. There are two souvenir shops where mainly French tourists come to buy ornaments and pottery.

The electricity and water supply were destroyed during the civil war. Bigiston has, however, submitted a proposal to the Community Development Fund (CDFS) for electrification which is currently being processed. Consequently there is no power and people use rainwater and water from the well. In the past they used water from the river for drinking, but that is no longer possible as the river has been polluted by, among other things, the gasoline from outboard engines. Moreover, the upper reaches of the Marowijne (Lawa and Tapanahony) are an intensively-used gold mining area and large quantities of mercury enter the water. Little is known about this in Bigiston, nor about the serious impact of mercury poisoning on human beings.

Bigiston has a primary school ("Bigiston Public School") with 65 pupils, including ten indigenous children. There are many problems with regard to education. Sometimes the teachers are absent for two to three weeks, with the result that the children increasingly fall behind. The village administration has complained about this to the inspectors and things have improved a little. The village administration would like to see indigenous teachers being sent to the school. At present there are only Aukaan teachers who, in addition to Dutch, also speak Aukaans to the children. The village leader thinks it would be better for the indigenous



**French tourists visit Bigiston
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

children to be instructed in Dutch and Kaliña and for them to learn handicrafts (basketwork and pottery) at school as well. There is an infants class and a kindergarten where the teachers' children are cared for. The kindergarten, however, has hardly any toys.

Health care in Bigiston is the responsibility of the Regional Health Department (RGD). There is a clinic, which has no furniture, nor does it have a nurse and the doctor has not been seen for over two years as apparently there is no money for transport. The villagers thus have to rely on the clinic at Albina and are forced to pay for transport themselves for each visit.



Four generations of women from Bigiston
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Chapter 3 Old Settlements

As outlined in the previous chapter, according to oral tradition the majority of villages in the Lower Marowijne area were established around the end of the 19th/beginning of the 20th century. The history of the villages dates back no further than 100-150 years but this does not mean that prior to this time the Lower Marowijne area was not inhabited by the Kaliña and Lokono. As in other areas of South America, in the past the indigenous peoples were less attached to one place. They travelled from place to place in search of fertile agricultural land, game, fruit, etc. Settlements were of a more temporary nature than today, but the people often returned to the same place after a long period of time, for example, to harvest the agricultural plots:

The ancestors of the people in this area did not live in one place. They moved around and created agricultural plots in areas they liked. Many of these places are still used as agricultural plots. Evidence of this nomadic existence can be seen in the form of objects and burial remains found throughout the forest indicating that the indigenous people really lived everywhere.²¹

A study of the written sources leads to the same conclusion:

The settlement of these areas by indigenous peoples has been continuous; prior to colonization and even prior to our era, this area has been inhabited by indigenous groups. (The Koriabo culture, remains of which were found in Marowijne, settled around 1200 BC in Suriname.)²²

In keeping with past tradition prime settlement locations tend to be: at the water's edge, at places with easy access to land (where there is a beach); on places that are high enough and not subject to flooding; and where the soil is fertile. From the archival research carried out by Caroline de Jong, it can be seen that certain attractive places have been inhabited almost continuously. For example, there have always been indigenous settlements along the Marowijne estuary (on both the east and west sides), whilst elsewhere, locations of villages often changed.

Influenced by the church, which had introduced education and medical provisions, the semi-nomadic style of living gradually developed into a more settled lifestyle. The inhabitants started creating permanent villages, building their houses from bricks, with roofs made of zinc sheets and concrete floors.

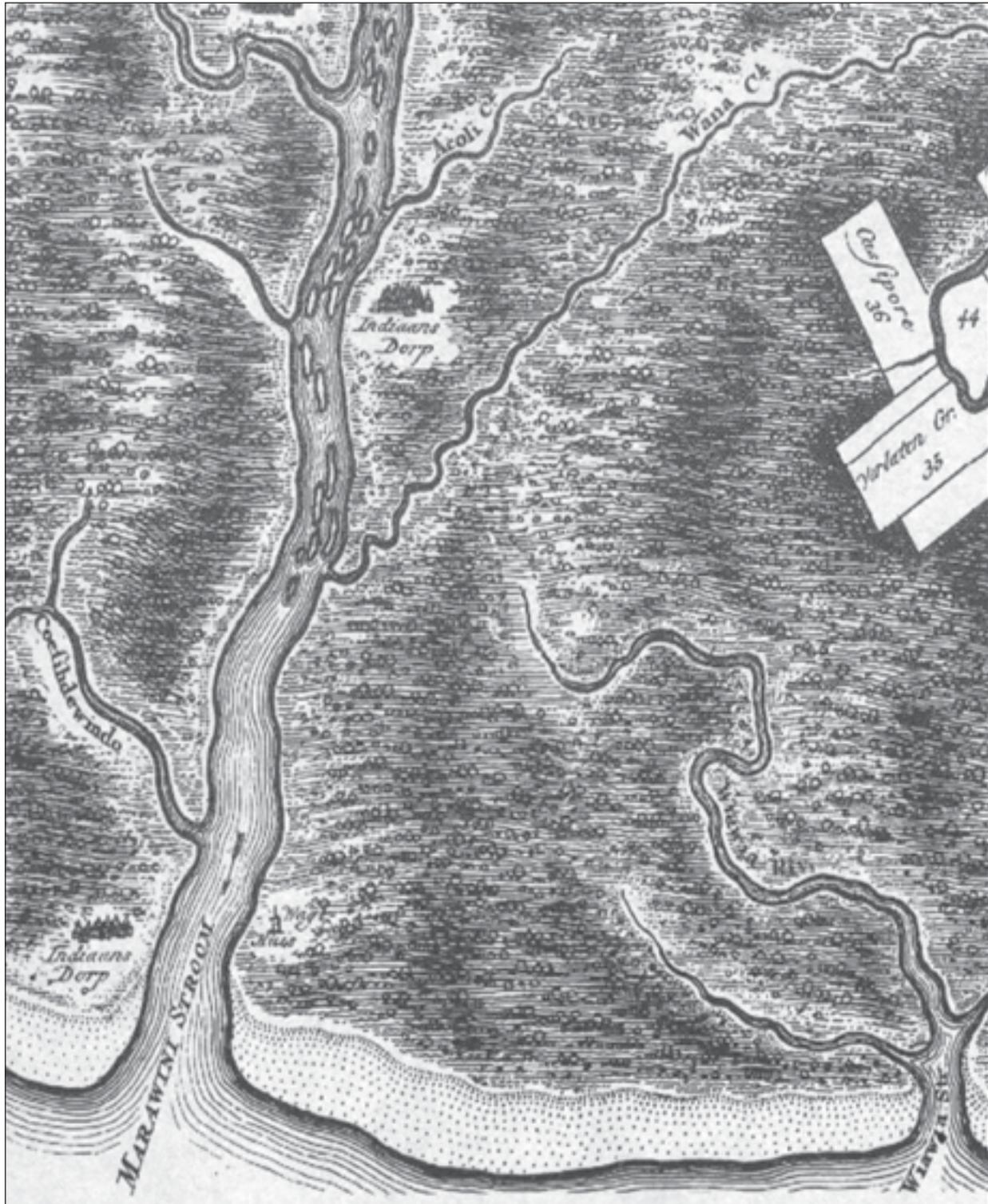


Traditional house in Tapuku
(Photo: C. de Jong)

It was customary to leave a settlement following a serious occurrence, such as an accident, the outbreak of disease (for example as in the Wane Creek area), the death of inhabitants, disturbance by, and fear of, evil spirits, certain diseases in the agricultural plots, or a fight leading to one of the quarreling parties leaving and founding a new village elsewhere. “When the agricultural plots became less fertile and people noticed that the game had moved further away”, the village leader of Alfonsdorp explains, “some inhabitants went looking for places where pakiras (collared peccaries) and pingos (white-lipped peccaries) came to eat. If a good spot was found the village moved in its entirety to the new area.”

²¹ Stories from the oral tradition of the indigenous villages in the Lower Marowijne area.

²² C. de Jong, Final report Archives study into historical and contemporary sources about the Kalin'a and Lokono along the Lower Marowijne River in Suriname, 18 March 2005.



This map from 1770 shows two “Indian villages”, one at the estuary of the Marowijne River (the current Yalimapo in French Guiana) and one near Acole Creek, in the vicinity of Albina/Bigiston.

Map by A. De Lavaux, “*Algemeene kaart of the Colonie of Provintie van Suriname*” (General Map of the colony of the province of Suriname), reprinted in: C. Koeman ed., *Links with the past. The History of Cartography of Suriname 1500-1971* (Amsterdam 1973)

Sometimes, as in the case of Alusiaka, (Box 3.1), the indigenous people were driven away or, as in the case of Aroemata Creek (Table 3.5), they were moved by the government. These deserted places became identifiable when, after a number of years, fruit trees or other plants, originally planted by the inhabitants, grew back in abundance.

There is evidence to show that, over the course of time, some deserted villages have been cleared and inhabited once more:

...When Erowanaï passed away, the remaining inhabitants left in the direction of Oelapa, because they felt too alone in Ero Wate. The descendants of Erowanaï, who had lived in Galibi and Maripande (in the Papatam-kondre region), decided a little while later once more to clear the place that had been founded by Erowanaï.²³

Even when uninhabited, these villages remain emphatically part of the ancestral territory, being referred to as “our places”. They have become reassuring places where people can return to, should they wish to, to build an agricultural plot or spend the night when hunting:

Indigenous people have always lived from the forest, the water and the land. All of the places where they lived, hunted or fished, or where they gathered their fruits, belong to them. These places have been abandoned now and even though they are not lived in any more, they are still used by their descendants. (Alfonsdorp)

In the past, Wane Creek was not a reserve and we could hunt freely. Now, according to people other than the indigenous peoples, it has become a nature reserve. Our hunting custom has not changed in this area, we hunt when we feel like hunting. The Wane Creek area is where we formerly lived and therefore we consider it our property and nobody will prevent us from going there. (Marijkedorp)

Box 3.1 How Alusiaka was sold

That is where my grandmother was. My mother was also there, but she was only small. My grandmother’s mango tree is still there. There was a creek, which is called Siriria. Alusiaka was the name of the village. They had a Captain Tarowewiran. That is what my grandmother used to tell me. There were many people. They had a good captain. The government (*lanti*) took care of them. They got all kinds of things, such as clothes and flour.

One day, two Englishmen arrived whom they could not understand as they could not speak ‘*negerengels*’ (nowadays, Sranan Tongo). They took a boy and asked him if he wanted to sell the village. The boy was uneducated, and did not go to school and, **despite having an interpreter**, he did not know what he was doing. He agreed to sell the village for 25 guilders, which the *bakra* (white man) immediately paid.

Subsequently the boy was killed out of revenge and buried at Babunsanti near the cashew forest. Later, the *bakras* returned and chased away the inhabitants who had to leave immediately. *Den panya panya* [they are dispersed]. They had to leave everything behind and didn’t know where to go. Grandmother went to the location where the lighthouse was later built. That is where they lived. They suffered a great deal and did not know where to go. My grandmother cried when she told me this. At night grandpa went to steal cassava when the *bakras* were asleep. Grandma cried at night: “what am I going to eat tomorrow?”. There was no shop at the time. They had to go to St. Laurent to sell, only then could they buy food. Later they made a well. Soon more people arrived – *bakras* who brought Javanese as workers to clear the land and plant coconut. They had chickens, everything. They also went and sold *krape* (turtle) eggs. Then Murray and his wife came to live there [near the light house]. Later the Indians moved away. The captain left for Pierrekondre. Everyone got dispersed.

Source: Interview with Elfriede Aloema, Christiaankondre, by E.R. Kambel (February-April 1999)

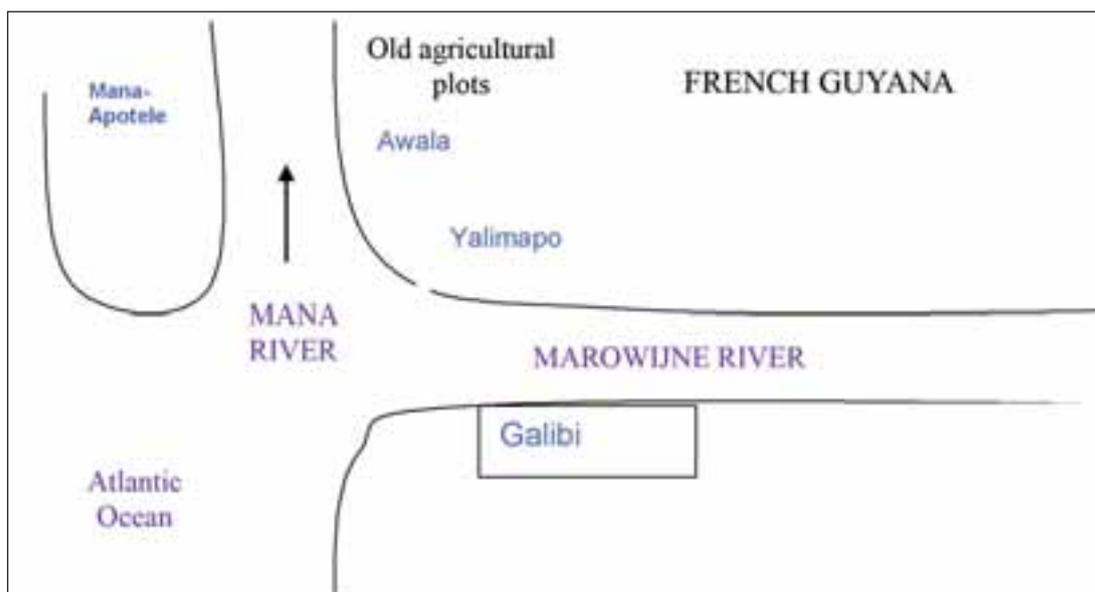
²³ Stories from the oral tradition of the indigenous villages in the Lower Marowijne area



Domestic fruit trees, such as this mango tree in a yard in Bigiston, are often the only reminders of human settlements after a place has been abandoned
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Overview of old settlements

The diagram below gives an overview of the old settlements together with additional information, where available, about the places and the uses to which they are currently put.



Settlements in the Galibi area
(Illustration by Sylvia Oeloekanamoe)

Table 3.1 Old settlements in the Galibi area

Settlement name	Location and comments
Alusiaka (Amakamaipo or Amakaña)	<p>Many people from Galibi came from here. It is situated 5 km north of Galibi and for a long time there was a lighthouse here. It was a big place and inhabited a long time ago. There are different opinions about what happened when Alusiaka was abandoned; according to some, the people were chased away (see Box 3.1); others say that the place had already been abandoned due to the outbreak of epidemics. In fact, in 1913 the area was leased to the Dutch West Indian Coconut Company to establish a coconut plantation. The leasehold certificate emphatically states that the site does not extend to the areas of the Amerindians (see article 4).²⁴</p> <p>From both oral and written tradition it appears that there were outbreaks of disease as a result of which the people moved away. Nowadays Alusiaka falls within the Galibi nature reserve. Department of Natural Resource Management headquarters have been established to facilitate inspections to counter the gathering of turtle eggs. The inhabitants of Galibi come to Alusiaka to hunt, fish and to establish agricultural plots.</p>
Kwasjie	In the Mana area, French Guiana; it is now uninhabited. This is the supposed home of Mr. Aridja, the father of Langaman.
Amana Apotele	In French Guiana. Amana-Apotele means “the bend”. Was in the past a big indigenous village. Many people who now live at Galibi also lived here or were born here. At present it is uninhabited.
Awala	<p>Opposite Mana-Apotele, on the other side of the Mana River. The people from Mana-Apotele had their agricultural plots here. Its name comes from the palm fruit.</p> <p><i>“Everyone from the village had agricultural plots here, and had to cross over by boat. We were bothered by disease but even more by the karbouw (buffalo) (K. Asau) belonging to the Europeans from Yalimapo. Because they had no more grass the animals moved, or were taken, to the agricultural plots to graze. Before long the buffalo were everywhere and, much to our dismay, we decided we had to abandon the fertile plots. We left Mana Apotele and looked for a new home and settled in Oelapa (Tapuku). We established a village and also created new agricultural plots. Oelapa is a kind of wood from which the indigenous people make their bows (letterwood). The village is still inhabited today.”</i></p>
Koeloesjirime and Kaipolone	On the other side of the river (French Guiana) by the bend at Yalimapo. The people from these villages came by sailboat to their agricultural plots near Alusiaka.
Ayawande (Posoli or Coswine)	Lies on the Maracam Creek on the French side and has very fertile land. People used to stay here for several months when working on their agricultural plots. It has recently been reoccupied by people who left Galibi during the civil war.
Panato	An old settlement on the other side of the creek (French Guiana). There is still a <i>kankantrie</i> tree (kapok) here and people from Galibi still have their agricultural plots here because the soil is very fertile. They obtained permission from the village authorities in Yalimapo, the nearest village in French Guiana.

²⁴ Leasehold certificate Dutch West Indian Coconut Company (Paramaribo, 1 July 1913).

Settlement name	Location and comments
Alanabate	This is far behind the large swamps and is hunting territory. The indigenous people had, and still have, agricultural plots here. They would put up shelters here and in the past rubber tapping (<i>balata</i>) was done. Wood sourced from here is used to build boats. The area is extensively wooded but during high tide it is accessible by small boat via the creek or on foot.
Samakoedoepo (Prapi Busi)	This is an important place for hunters. It is near Wane Creek, close to Suralco's site at Moengo. Residents of Pierrekondre know Samakoedoepo as Prapi Boesi. The hunters stay overnight in Samakoedoepo because it is so far away. <i>"Many people lived on this spot. In the past people came here to hide from the man-eater (pairandupo). There is still a mango tree here as a reminder of an earlier settlement and remnants of pottery have been found, in particular from the Samakoe people. You can still see half of a samakoe. Hence the name Samakoedoepo."</i> However, some people say that the remnants were left behind by earlier slaves who escaped into the woods and stole the items from the indigenous people. The slaves would look for <i>balata</i> there. There are also stories that Samakoedoepo is no longer accessible and that no-one knows exactly where it is. <i>"It has become eerie and the spirit of Samoekoedoepo makes sure that it's not possible to get there anymore".</i> ²⁵
Oeloesjie (Urusi)	Also the name of a creek near Christiaankondre. The name Oeloesjie comes from the water spirit of this creek. Oeloesjie was inhabited in the past; it used to be a big village. Many people had agricultural plots there. Oeloesjie is still used for logging, agricultural plots and fishing (swamp fish). <i>"At Oeloesjie the inhabitants were haunted by a water spirit. If you took a bath in the creek, you would disappear. The indigenous people didn't want that to happen any more, so decided on a plan of action to chase away the spirit. Koro looks like a calabash, but it is a creeper. It has seeds in it. People used it for storing water and to keep it cool. It used to be planted in the agricultural plots and today can be found in the homes of some elders. A very old woman who did not often take a bath lived in the village. People threaded small koro on a string for the old woman to wear so that when she took a bath and the water spirit pulled her away, they would be able to hear the koro as she moved. When this happened the villagers came with sharp objects to where the old woman had been and they heard the sound of the koro. The water spirit had pulled her a long way away and had taken her to a big pit where the spirit lived. The villagers stabbed with the sharp long sticks trying to find their victim. By now the water spirit had let go of the woman and was dead, together with the old woman who did not survive the incident."</i>

Settlement name	Location and comments
Oelani (Urani or Kapasi)	<p>Indigenous people have been living at Oelani for a long time. It is known for its clay. This is where <i>koeli</i> and <i>kwepi</i> can be found (see chapter 7).</p> <p><i>“A few indigenous people have been living in the vicinity of Oelani for a long time. If you went to Albina, you could see their lamps shining over the water. You can still find the mango trees that the indigenous people planted. Some people became ill because spirits possessed the place. These spirits could be seen walking around, looking like white people on the beach. It is also said that this was the mud spirit, who could be seen on the beach as a white man wearing a cap. An indigenous man had once seen this figure on the beach and had taken his gun and shot the white spirit. But after he had done so he himself died on that spot.”</i>²⁶ At Oelani there is a graveyard where you can find beads and pottery remains, similar to those in the graveyard of Galibi.</p>
Moerbana	Between Galibi and Wane Creek.
Atapaloekoe	A place founded behind Oetapo after Alusiaka had been abandoned. In the past the people arrived by sailing boats. The place is called Atapaloekoe because Aloekoe means plums and there are many plum trees here. <i>“But the people were not happy here and they continued to travel to Atapiriri”</i> . ²⁷
Oetapo (Maripa, Babunsanti)	Oetapo means sand bank/island and this is where, at low tide, the sand becomes visible. Oetapo is also called Babunsanti, after a Hindustani fisherman (Baboen), who lived there. This man was known as a bad person who did not live peacefully with the indigenous people. Many indigenous people lived in shelters on this big Oetapo. <i>“These were the people who had sold their land at Alusiaka to the bakra (white men). They gave Oetapo its name.”</i> ²⁸ Turtles used to lay their eggs here and people still come here to hunt, fish and catch crabs. Fruit can also be found and there are still agricultural plots here. There is now a guest house (Warana Lodge) erected by Stinasu, a public foundation.
Eilanti	Close to Oetapo; in the past a living area for the Kaliña. The Warana sea turtles laid their eggs here when the sand was above the water. When it was not sea turtle season, the people would fish
Kwamabate	Inland, near Atapaloekoe. <i>“Old saberis (clay bowls) were found here; it also means a piece of bamboo”</i> . Kwama means bamboo.
Wysje – Wysje	Near Oetapo. It means a type of fine, thin grass.
Sjiepiobate	Place where the <i>sjiepio</i> (<i>busikandra</i> , forest candles) could be found. Known as an area where slaves kidnapped indigenous women. Mr. Sjinga, better known as “Grandpa Bambi” lived here with his family. They later moved to Galibi.
Asjiewagara	In the Oetapo area. Various types of fruit, as well as cassava and cotton were grown here.
Pamasande	<i>“Deep in the forests behind Oetapo many indigenous people lived; the place was called Pamasande. The hunters still go there. Old objects or remains such as a samaku, a sabera and a water jar, belonging to the indigenous people who used to live here, can still be found today.”</i> ²⁹

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Table 3.2 Old settlements in the Wane Creek area

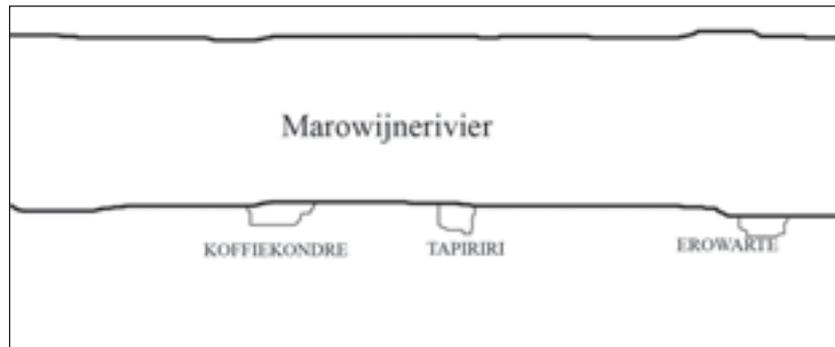
Settlement name	Location and comments
Orou Posu	Near the first high section of Wane Creek, where the creek makes a sharp bend. There used to be a police post here, to catch smugglers, and a village.
Prasara Kondre	Founded by the Blanca family from Alfonsdorp/Neger Creek. The people grew crops and came for logging.
Kapasi pasi	This was a road to Kapasi kondre (or Oelani). People also lived here.
Emelina kampu	Situated on an island between the swamps.
Ma Francina kampu (also called Monsanto kondre)	Ma Francina was the founder of this village.
Kerkikondre	This was the biggest village, with a school and a church. There was also a graveyard and a soccer field. This is where the village leader, with authority over the whole Wane Creek area, was based. George Watamaleo ("Pa Sjorie") was the village head around 1920.
Bethlehemkondre	The Ligorie family lived here.
Bergmanskamp(u)	
Tingi Moni (Pa Petruskondre, Uncle Pée Kampu)	
Monsantokondre (or Monsanto kampu)	This was almost at the end, beyond Sara-Sara Nesie.
Sara-Sara Nesie	This means "shrimp nest"; there were a lot of shrimps here. This is where Mr. Alfons lived, after whom Alfonsdorp was later named. Sara-Sara Nesie lies on the T-junction of Wane Creek and Moiwana Creek.
George Kondre	Just past Sara-Sara Nesie.
Pampoen Gron	This was behind two big savannas. It is full of fish.

Table 3.3 Old settlements in the Moiwana Creek area

Settlement name	Location and comments
Owru kondre	Lies on Moiwana Creek. The people who had come from Sara-Sara Nesie (Wane Creek) in 1936 lived here, before they left for Baka Busi.
Baka Busi	This is old Alfonsdorp, right next to the current Alfonsdorp, 3 km further into the woods. People lived here between the mid-1940s and 1951, after which they moved to the Oost-West Verbindig (east-west connecting road), which has become the current Alfonsdorp.



Many Lokono villages were settled along the now abandoned Wane Creek
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)



Settlements around Erowarte
(Illustration by S. Marawai)

Table 3.4 Old settlements in the Erowarte area

Settlement name	Location and comments
Iriñau (Blaka Kriki)	A village belonging to the people of Marijkedorp. A path and a creek led to Wane Creek and the swamps.
Pa Kofikondre or Kofikondre	Founded by Jaloewai. He was the former chief and as well as <i>piay</i> of Alusiaka. The people who lived in Kofikondre later settled in Galibi.
Atapiriri	Situated about 10 minutes by boat from Erowarte. Atapiri is a type of tree. The people, including Mr. Sjimani, one of the eldest people of Alusiaka, came here from Atapaloekoe. Everyone in Atapiriri has now passed away.

Settlement name	Location and comments
Kanawanbo, Kanuwa (L) or Kanawa (K)	<p>A creek in the forest, five hours' walk from Erowarte. At one time many indigenous people lived here.</p> <p><i>"The indigenous people came here in the past to hide from the white men or the man-eater."³⁰</i></p> <p><i>"This man-eater, who was killing the indigenous people, was of Brazilian origin and was called Pairandepo. The indigenous people escaped to Kanaway on two big boats the length of a dugout. They fled via a creek up to the end. When they arrived there, they buried the boats in the sand, so that the man-eater could not find them".</i></p> <p>The boats are still there and are partly visible. No-one touches them as the indigenous people believe that if they do it will start raining very hard and they will become sick. Then they will have to go to the <i>piay</i> to be cured. There is also a big <i>samaku</i> there.</p>
Sjimiri-epih	There is a creek in the vicinity of Erowarte with this name; people had agricultural plots there because it was fertile. They also lived there.

Table 3.5 Old settlements in the Bigiston area

Note: there were some places in the vicinity of Bigiston where indigenous people used to live and which can still be seen. Some of these places are still in use. The people lived in a variety of small areas. All these places were jointly called **Temeren**. This is how Bigiston came into being.

Settlement name	Location and comments
Mopénde	Gets its name from a big <i>Mope (hog plum)</i> tree and is still inhabited.
Emetale	Means "the inlet". A certain Mr. Trangaman (strong man) lived here. Has been inhabited recently.
Awarabate	A place where there were many <i>awara (peewah)</i> trees. It is inhabited.
Apoekoetja-oende	There still is an old indigenous graveyard here. This is where the Maroons currently build their boats on the waterfront, close to Bigiston.
Kokko-oende	This is where the school is now. In Surinamese (Sranan Tongo) it is called Kronto-kondre.
Kwamande or Kwama oende	A place with many <i>kwama</i> (bamboos). It is inhabited.
Aroemata Creek	There was a big village here with evidence of burials. People grew crops, fished and hunted. There were no schools or doctors and the authorities decreed that everyone should move from here to Bigiston where no-one was living at the time. The authorities had a school built for all the children. The people moved to Terre Rouge (French Guiana). There is also a big <i>samaku</i> there. It is now uninhabited.
Koejoeroe-djara	These people moved to Bigiston so their children could be educated.
Kwatta-joem	Was on the French side, as Koejoeroe-djara was.

Parakaré	<p>Parakare is a creek. This was also an indigenous place. These people had also come to Bigiston.</p> <p><i>“The people who lived at Bigiston had such bad luck. There was a big ‘tiger’ there (in fact it was a spirit) and each week one person lost his or her life. The tiger would walk through the whole village early in the evening and the people were afraid and therefore went inside their huts around half past five or six o’clock. That is why the people left Bigiston to found another place called Makelei. Indeed there was also a tiger at Makelei and there happened to be a piay in Bigiston. The piay brought all these indigenous people together. In those days they obeyed and they made a number of large huts so that young and old were together. The piay was named Louis Awatjale and he said that he needed six men to train. The men were found and they were successfully trained to become real piaymen. They were: Kembo, Trangaman, Jengoeno, Asjoekoetie, Koedarie, Sjabere (the son-in-law of Louis Awatjale). They were the best piaymen within the village of Bigiston and they practiced hard to kill those big tigers. The six men were in a hut (tokai) where they worked very hard. By day and by night they had to shake their marakas (big rattle). And they killed this big tiger.”</i></p> <p>These indigenous people from Parakaré moved to different villages. Some now live on the French side in Iracoubou. Parakaré is currently inhabited by Maroons.</p>
Atakali	<p>Founded by Captain Talokoewa. Lies between Papatam and Bigiston. This village belongs to the Maipio family.</p>
Maripande	<p>Founded by Captain Talokoewa.</p>
Makelei	<p>Founded by Captain Talokoewa.</p> <p><i>“At Maripande there was once an epekodono. During this festival the people from Makelei came to Maripande to announce that something was going on in Makelei. They heard strange noises, which was European music. The next evening it became worse. People then became sick and died. Those who survived moved. After a while someone returned to Makelei where they saw that there was a crowing cockerel on top of the roof of a shelter and two cows in one of the empty shelters. This was the evil spirit of the village who had caused the people to move. After that nobody went back to Makelei.”</i></p> <p><i>“Another story is that a few women in Makelei went to fetch wood in the forest and when they arrived they saw the wood standing straight. That was due to the spirit of the wood or the spirit of the forest. Afterwards some people died and the place was abandoned.”³¹</i></p>
Papatamkondre	<p>A Maroon village, originally founded by indigenous people, currently occupied by a few indigenous people.</p>
Manjabon kondre	<p><i>Idem.</i></p>
Mopi kondre	<p>The site of Acoli Creek and inhabited by indigenous people in the past. At present it is a Maroon village.</p>
Portal island (Makolo)	<p>On the other side of Bigiston. There were indigenous settlements here in the past. At present it is a Maroon village.</p>

³¹ *Ibid.*

Chapter 4 Agriculture

In all eight villages, in addition to hunting and fishing, people are still very much engaged in agriculture. For this, they use the age-old technique in which a piece of forest is cut down, burned and then planted for a period of years. The land is then left fallow to give the forest a chance to regrow. After a certain period of time the same piece of land can then be used once more. This method, rotational agriculture or shifting cultivation, is characteristic of the indigenous peoples of lowland South America.

Crops

Bitter cassava is the most important crop grown by the Kaliña and Lokono. It is used to make the traditional daily food of cassava bread (*K. alepa*, *L. kali*) and the well known *peprewatra* (pepper water/hot soup) (*K. atjupo*, *L. kadekra*). The alcoholic drink *kasiri* is also made from bitter cassava. In addition to bitter cassava numerous other crops are grown, such as sweet cassava, *napi* (cushcush), yams (greater Asiatic yam), and also different types of banana – cooking and eating varieties – pineapple and peppers (see Table 4.1 below). The non-traditional ‘urban’ vegetables such as *tayerblad*, *klaroen*, *kouseband* (string beans), tomatoes, *boulangier* (aubergine), okra, *antroewa*, and *sopropo* (bitter melon) are also grown, as well as different kinds of legumes.

Table 4.1 Food crops
(Alfonsdorp, Bigiston, Christiaankondre, Marijkedorp)

Surinamese/English name	Kaliña name	Lokono name	Description
bitter cassava	kejere	kalidoeri	
<i>napi</i> /cushcush	napoi	himikoena	Tuber; the pulp differs from sweet potato (red/purple). Many people use it for soup. There is white and red <i>napi</i> .
<i>nyuamsi</i> /yam (great asiatic yam)	pirisja (wit); palija (rood);	dorokwaro	Also a tuber
sweet cassava	jupo	bosoli	
<i>dasjin</i> /Chinese eddoe, taro	dasjin	dasjin	<i>dasjin</i> is a tuber, but differs from <i>nyamsi</i>
pineapple	nana	nana	
banana	paloeloe/paruru	manikinia, dakoetehe	
<i>koren</i> /corn	awasji	marishi	When this corn is ripe it is light yellow. The leaves can then be removed and the cob boiled with salt. It can also be roasted. If it has become too hard, it can be grated and used for porridge, or as chicken feed.
sweet potato	<i>napi</i>	halikjie	Each sweet potato has white pulp, but the skin can have different colors: pink or white. The sweet potato is sweeter than <i>napi</i> .
<i>blaka patate</i> /black potato	kalasai	karomero	Used as (red) coloring for <i>kasiri</i> .
sugar cane	asjietjalou	shikaro	Other types are <i>walapa</i> and <i>palitjo</i>
banana	paloeloené	peletena	
pepper	Pomi	hatjie	Other varieties are <i>sjirima</i> , <i>kani</i> , <i>kaffepima</i> (small, round and black, but rarely found now)
water melon	podija	patja	
pumpkin	awejama		



**Agricultural plot in Erowarte with, among other crops, bitter cassava, banana, pineapple and papaya
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Many of these crops (sweet cassava, sweet potato, *napi* and ripe banana) are used for the Creole fish dish *heri-heri*.

In addition to food crops other useful crops are also planted. For example, cotton (K. *mauwru*, L. *jafo*) to make hammocks. Calabash (L. *Ida*, K. *kwai*) is grown for use as spoons and cups, especially for serving *kasiri* and for stirring. There are different kinds of calabash, each with different functions: the large, the small, and the round (for scooping *kasiri*) and the long ones for ladles. Last of all, the calabash is also used to make the *piay's maraka* (see Table 9.1).

The Kaliña also grow *koesoewé* (annatto). This is used for painting the face and body during rituals and parties and at the end of menstruation. During childbirth it is smeared on the woman's legs. In addition, a variety of plant species with intoxicating properties are grown (see Chapter 6 – Fishing), as well as tobacco and different kinds of medicinal plants. In Langamankondre they say that a certain kind of pumpkin (K. *koro* or *moeloetoegoe*, L. *kodo*) which is now hardly ever cultivated, used to be used as a water jar. If you filled it with water, it would stay cool, just like a thermos flask. Some elders still have them in their homes.

Certain kinds of crops are no longer cultivated because of the lack of supplies of “suckers”, cuttings, seeds or plants. Also because nowadays fewer people grow crops. In the old days, plants would be grown from cuttings or exchanged with other growers. The women from Erowarte say that during the civil war a range of varieties were lost because the people had to flee and could not go back and collect their plant stocks. In Erowarte, for example, crops such as sweet potato, black potato, sugar cane and *napi* are no longer cultivated. People from other villages, for example Marijkedorp, still grow them. The women from Erowarte do still have extensive knowledge about the different kinds of crops:



***Napi*, ginger and bananas at the Albina market
(Photo: C. de Jong)**

- **bitter cassava:** the Kaliña are familiar with the following varieties: *waraloebo*, *kompé*, *difé*, *koemerepo*, *kwakebo* (yellow cassava), *toekoema*, *masholpo*, *ipoewabe* (a low-growing cassava plant that was lost during the civil war), *fransjina* and *kasiri* (a juicy soft variety, used in particular for boiled *kasiri*). The varieties that the Lokono know of are: *dodokere*, *dolihi*, *koemparepo*, and *heheto*. To make *kasiri*, first of all the grated cassava is cooked until it is ready, then squeezed, and thereafter it is further prepared (black potato is added for color and sometimes sugar too). In addition *kasiri* can also be made from sugar cane. This becomes rum if you let it stand a long time. Other kinds of bitter cassava are *awasjie bo* (a hard variety for grating), *patakai bo*, *dofi*, *sobe sobe* (very soft), *pendjo bo* (which has a pale yellow and a white variety).

- **sweet cassava:** there are three different types, which are harvested at three months, six months and one year respectively; and three with different colored tubers (yellow, white and one with a dark stem and dark leaves);
- **pineapple:** The Lokono know the *warakaba nana* (round and green), *kamasi* (“buffalo head”), *hijaro nana*, *doeli nana* (dark pineapple), and *koro koro* (red pineapple). The varieties known to the Kaliña are: *toesi nana*, *kojoe nana*, *maipuri oepoepo* (“buffalo head”), *kulawanana*, (the leaves are used to make string – a sort of flax) and *knolo* (this is red and big, but scarce). In addition we have *emopo mena nana*, *woli nana* (round and small) and *wala nana* (red).
- **eating bananas and cooking bananas:** *paloeloené* (banana); *asji-bana* (bacove banana), *maripja* (Sr. soekroefinga), *moetapere* (apple banana), *soko soko* (sweet and sour banana) and *wala* (red banana); the generic name for all the banana types is *paloeloe*.



Produce for sale at the market in Albina
(Photos: C. de Jong)

Crops are mostly planted for subsistence and whatever is left over is sold. The three most important cash crops are: bitter cassava, sweet cassava and *napi* (cushcush). Various products are made from bitter cassava and sold at the market: cassava bread, *kasiri*, *kasir iepio* (cassava water with which *peprewatra* can be made), *kwak* (dry baked cassava), *kokori* (cassava pap), and *sjibipa* (cassava ‘starch’ used to make cookies). A smallholder from Marijkedorp says that nowadays some pieces of land are specially

allocated to commercial growing. For example, with cassava: the cuttings (plant stocks) are sold to other planters, the tubers are processed as cassava bread and the juice from the grated cassava is used for *peprewatra*.



The agricultural plot

In May, during the short rainy season, new agricultural plots are identified. Particular attention is paid to the need for the land to be free from flooding during the rainy season, so high land is sought. Of course the fertility of the soil is also important: “*If, for example, many awaras are growing there, this is a sign of fertility*”. The people also pay attention to the condition of the soil: “*Fertility can also be identified by looking at the soil: if, for example, it’s greasy and muddy. The soil must be mud-colored,*” explains a woman from Christiaankondre. In addition they say that where there are many angleworms, the cassava cuttings grow better. In general cassava prefers mixed land: “*The land must not only consist of one kind of sand, for example of sharp sand. It must not be too muddy; it can be mixed with black soil*”. And if someone makes a plot somewhere, others often follow rapidly. If the land is found to be good, a line is dug around the plot so that others know that it is already occupied (see below about the ownership of agricultural plots).

The size of the plot depends on the quantity of cassava cuttings (plant material) that the woman has. If she has just a few, a large piece of land does not need to be cleared. The needs of the family may also play a role (a big family needs a larger plot). A woman from Christiaankondre said that in the past the man’s physical condition played a role: “*In fact it boiled down to whether he was man enough to cut open and clear that size of land. In the past in particular this was the case. He had*



A newly cleared agricultural plot
(Photo: C. de Jong)

to prove himself". In the past the agricultural plots were also bigger, ($\pm 100 \text{ m}^2$), nowadays about 50 m^2 is cleared. A large plot is generally considered to be better because the crops then have the space to grow well.

Most agricultural plots (L. *emelijato caboeja*, K. *manja*) are cleared before the start of the long dry season (August–September). During this season the cleared pieces of land are burned. Sometimes, new plots are also cleared before the short dry season (February–May). To clear a new piece of land, use can

be made of the *moshiro* (K.) or *majoeri* (L.). This is a traditional activity drawing on joint labor so as to relieve one person from doing all the work. (See Box 1).

Once the undergrowth has been cut down and well dried by the sun, the rest is burned. This is partly to get rid of the remaining trees and bushes, and also because the ashes serve as a nutrient for the future crops. After the burning period, which may take one or two weeks, the burned wood is piled up and the land cleared further. The cutting and burning is typically done by men, and the clearing of the land mainly by the man and woman jointly. Once cleared, the plot is the woman's domain (see below: Property and ownership).

Box 4.1 *Moshiro and majoeri*

Moshiro is the Kaliña name for the act of joint labor [The Lokono name is *majoeri*]. *Moshiro* is practised to reduce the work and to finish it more quickly. It is unpaid. When an agricultural plot is to be cleared, additional food is gathered in advance and *kasiri* is made. The people are asked a week in advance to help with the clearing. By then the owner will already have removed the weeds and small trees so the men can start to cut down the other trees immediately. Before starting work the men come together. First they eat and then go to the forest. They take a supply of *kasiri* with them to quench their thirst as well as tobacco (cigarettes). The owner then shows them how big the agricultural plot has to be and the men work for several hours to ensure that it gets done. Once the work is finished they return home and eat and drink again. After the meal some men stay for a while; others go home, bathe and then return with their wives and other family members to have some fun.

Circumstances when this method is used includes:

- clearing an agricultural plot that has been cut and burned
- planting an agricultural plot
- removing weeds from an agricultural plot
- putting into the water a dug-out tree trunk that is to become a boat (K. *piaka*), or extending the sides (K. *paja's*) of the *piaka*
- transporting building and roofing material from the forest
- weaving and repairing fishing nets
- clearing a yard, village or road.



Men from Marijkedorp take a break after jointly clearing an agricultural plot
(Photo: K. Neke)

By: Georgette Kumanajare

Planting and harvesting

Once the short rainy season has started (November–February) planting starts. The time spent on this depends on the amount of plant stock, but also on the distance away: “*if the plot is close by, then sometimes the planting is over by December. But if it is far away, then they may have to continue until March*”. Depending on the crops, they may be harvested from nine months to one year after planting. As soon as the harvest is over replanting mostly takes place immediately, so that the second planting has the whole of the year.

In the past, once the land had been planted and the crop had started growing, the man would then pursue other activities such as hunting and fishing, as well as doing basketry (see Chapter 7). The women would spin cotton for a hammock. This is still the case, but the plot must of course be maintained, weeds have to be removed, etc. Nowadays the women (prefer to) do other handicrafts than hammock making, because it is heavy work. For example, they make ornaments, indigenous clothing (such as shoulder cloths), or gather fruit such as coconuts or oranges to sell at the market.

Table 4.2 Growing seasons (Langamankondre)

Activity	Short dry season	Long rainy season	Long dry season	Short rainy season	Comments
Year 1	Feb–May	May–Aug	Aug–Nov	Nov–Feb	
Cutting and clearing	xxxx		xxxx		Must be dry enough. Best before the dry season.
Burning			xxxx		
Planting				xxxx	The land is now moist, but it is better to plant before the rainy season begins.
Year 2					
Harvesting			xxxx		From 8 to 12 months
<i>Second plantings</i>					
Weeding	xxxx			xxxx	Before the rainy season
Harvesting	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	Can take the whole year
Replanting	xxxx		xxxx	xxxx	Before the rainy season

Old agricultural plots

An agricultural plot is used for about two years before the food runs out. The first planting is called *manja* (K.) (L. *asere*) and as explained by the women from Erowarte: “*while this manja is growing you have to make sure that a new agricultural plot is cleared*”. The new land then gives food for two years. A second planting on the same agricultural plot is called *moenbo* (K) (L: *ijo*).

There is, however, one person in Alfonsdorp who has been working on the same plot for ten years. This woman says that she uses the weeds, which she burns, and which then serve as compost. She also plants cassava cuttings in places that have not previously been planted. She repeats this method each year, so that it is not necessary to lay out a new plot every two years.

After five to ten years an old (abandoned) agricultural plot (Sr. *kapuweri*; K. *manjapo*, L. *kabejadjiki*) can be used again. It must certainly be fertile again after this time. It is possible, though, that when the land is exhausted, other crops can be grown on it, for example, passion fruit, peanuts and pineapple.

Changes

There have been no drastic changes in the manner in which the land is cultivated. It is true that in the past the people worked with stone pickaxes (L. *shiba toebaro*), picks (L. *shiba casarona*, K. *samba*) and stone scythes (L. *shiba casipora*). These tools have now been replaced by iron tools. Axes are now hardly ever used (L. *baro*, K. *wewe*) for felling big trees, but are instead cut with a chainsaw, known as a *stihl* (the brand name of most chainsaws used). What has changed is that the people no longer stay for months on end on their agricultural plot. This, amongst other things, is because of schooling – in the past the children were simply taken along to the plot – and also because nowadays people have outboard motors instead of paddles or sailing boats (K. *piraboko*), and so can move about more easily.

Cassava is also processed in more or less the same manner as in the past and there have been few changes in the materials. Something that is seldom used any more is the grater with iron teeth that was used to make *kasiri* and *kwak*. The iron was bought in French Guiana. The iron was hammered into pieces which were then inserted into a board made from wana wood (K. *wonoe*), *kwali* wood or basra locus (angelique) (K. *kijerew*). In Christiaankondre there is only one man who still makes these, namely Mr. Pungtai.



Baking cassava bread (Erowarte)
(Photos: E.R. Kambel)

Box 4.2 Processing cassava

When did you last go to your agricultural plot?

- I went yesterday with my husband.

How many baskets were you able to take with you?

- I could only take one basket. Fortunately I did not bring more, because my daughter-in-law who was going to help me got her period. It is forbidden among us.

You are peeling the cassava. What are you going to do next?

- When I've finished peeling, I must wash it, grate it with a *samari* and then squeeze it in a squeezer (*matapi*).

How do the indigenous women use the squeezer?

- When they are finished grating, they form the grated tubers into a big ball and put this in the squeezer till it is full. They then put the stick (*matasaba*) below the opening and also a bowl under the squeezer to catch the water (juice). They then sit on the stick, the juice comes out of the holes of the *matapi*, drips below and is then caught in the tub. This can take about half an hour to three-quarters of an hour. The stick is then removed. The squeezed cassava is then taken out of the squeezer and placed in a pan.

What do you do then with the water?

- You boil the water, *kasjiripo*, the same afternoon or the next day. When really necessary you can do it the same afternoon. That is the sweet one. If you do it the next day, it is the sour one. You have to boil the water well, for about an hour, because it is poisonous (prussic acid).

What do you need if you want to bake cassava bread (alepa)?

- The squeezed cassava (*kijereboe*); a hollowed-out piece of tree trunk in which you will pound it (*ako*); a stamper (*akodano*); a sieve (*manari*); a baking tray (*alinjadoe*); dry wood (*wewe* or *alinjadoejate*); and a fan (*woli woli*). The *ako* is made of *kijerew* (*basra locus*). You use a stamper (*akodano*) to pound the cassava to become fine flour. After this the flour is sieved. Meanwhile you have to heat the baking tray (*K. arinjadoe*). You make a fire under the baking tray. The wood must be spread out well under the tray. With a bit of cassava you test how hot the baking tray is; it must not be too hot, otherwise the cassava will burn. The big grains that remain in the sieve are the *apiripo*. They also use this for chicken feed or they let it become old to cook porridge. Then you take the fan and scoop the fine sieved *kijereboe* onto the baking tray that has meanwhile become hot. Then you spread it on the baking tray. When it is completely ready (after about five minutes) you take it away and you enjoy a delicious *alepa*.

How long can you preserve it?

- The squeezed cassava cannot be stored longer than one week. That is why you have to bake everything within four or five days, then the *kijereboe* is dry. After a week or longer it gets black spots. This means that it is getting spoilt. The baked cassava (*alepa*) can be preserved for one to two years, but then you have to store it in a well-closed barrel. They also bake *kwak* from it.

Do the younger ones participate in the activity?

- Some of them do, some don't. This is our culture, we have to preserve it. This is our staple food. We need *alepa* every day!

Interview by: S. Oeloekanamoe

Agricultural customs and rituals

According to the Kaliña and Lokono many of the customs which in the past were performed, for example, to ensure a good harvest, are no longer followed. *“In the past if, for example, the piay (shaman) had a dream about some evil spirit, then those spirits would be driven away before the people went to clear a piece of land”*. The influence of Christianity has undoubtedly had a great impact. Yet there are still some who, before they start planting, first turn to the natural forces. In Alfonsdorp, for example: *“You take a calabash with beteri (sweet cassava drink). Then you speak and pour it on the land; you first call upon God (L. Adajali) so that everything you plant will grow well and if such a forest has spiritual obstacles, such as forest spirits and other evil spirits, you first have to perform a spiritual ceremony otherwise you cannot plant”*. A woman from Bigiston told us that her mother burned *awara* stones, cotton seeds, fish bones or a sloth skin and this smell would drive all the evil spirits away.

They also comply strictly with the rule that menstruating women are not allowed to go to their agricultural plot; this is to prevent poor growth of the crops. If a girl or a woman during her menstruation does enter her plot or the forest, people fear that the forest spirits will then do evil as they smell the blood. *“A male forest spirit is Imiawale. He will bother this woman, for example, in her dreams in the appearance of a man. He will beg her to be with him and she will become ill. Then she has to go to the piay. He will then go and talk to that Imiawale”*, explained an informant. A number of young women added that they prefer not to work on the agricultural plot during their period, because they do not feel well and can possibly become dizzy.

In order to get a good harvest they first ensure that the land is always kept clear of weeds. They also do not chop firewood in agricultural plots, because this could bring giant ants.

Role division based on gender

All the informants indicated that both men and women work on the agricultural plot. Much of the work is done together:

- The woman prefers to do the planting with her husband because it is hard work;
- clearing the land after it has been cut (carrying wood) is the man's job;
- maintenance (weeding) is done together;
- harvesting is done together.

Agricultural areas

In the vicinity of Galibi and Bigiston there is still sufficient agricultural land. It was only after the civil war that Bigiston became more thinly populated. Nowadays fewer people practice agriculture, especially the younger ones who move away from the villages for education; they do not have the knowledge and the physical strength to practice agriculture. In the villages in the Albina area there is, however, greater pressure on the available land because that area is more densely populated. This has resulted in people having to ask permission of the village leader before being able to open up an agricultural plot, because it may already be occupied or promised to someone else who has not yet started work on it. So the captain has to be consulted first. This is not the case in Galibi and Bigiston. (Also see 'Property and ownership', below.)

Because most pieces of land have already been opened up in the immediate vicinity of Galibi, the people from Galibi return to the areas where they have had agricultural plots in the past, for example at **Maripa** and **Atapaloekoe** (Baboensanti). In Galibi they also create agricultural plots at **Posoli**, **Panato**, **Urani** (or **Kapasi**) and **Urusi** (the creek near Christiaankondre). **Ayawande** (or **Posoli** or **Coswine**) is situated along the Maracam Creek on the French side and has much fertile land. In the past this was also used as a resting place when people went to their agricultural plots and sometimes they stayed there for months. It is now used by people who have moved away

from **Galibi. Panato** is another place on the French side, where people still have agricultural plots because the soil there is very fertile. They obtained permission from the authorities in the closest village in French Guiana (**Yalimapo**).

Food shortages occur either if there has been too much rain, which causes the crops to rot, or in the event of a serious drought. Cassava alone can withstand these weather conditions. There can also be shortages if there are too many giant ants, (*L. koesé*; *K. Koemako*), grasshoppers (*L. foetji*), worms and caterpillars (*L. koemakatji*). In addition to ants and other insects, animals such as deer, *kapoea*'s (water pigs) and sometimes also tapirs, or peccaries also come and eat the cassava tops and the young banana plants. Rabbits (*kon koni*) and hares (*hei*) in particular come and eat the cassava tubers. Finally, the lack of plant stocks could be a reason for people having less food. The cassava cuttings must be stored upright in a cool place, otherwise they dry out. Disease too can cause food shortages if people are unable to clear and to work on their agricultural plots.

Property and ownership of agricultural areas

As a rule the agricultural plots are the collective property of the village: as a resident of the village you have the right to clear land within the village's territory. Even if agricultural plots are sometimes cleared jointly (by means of *moshiro* or *majoeri*), once the land has been cleared, it becomes individual property: *“Even if the land is cleared collectively, everything is individual property. Everyone is responsible for his own agricultural plot”*.

In some villages, the villagers themselves have to ask permission from the village administration (Alfonsdorp). According to an informant from Marijkedorp this was not always the case: *“In the past it was not necessary to ask permission from someone, or the captain. Permission was not required because the forest was big and one could choose any spot one wanted. Now it is like this: you examine the land and if you are satisfied, you notify the captain so that he can give you permission to clear it”*.

In other villages, such as Galibi, it is not necessary for the villagers themselves to get permission from the village leader. Here, it is people from other villages in the Lower Marowijne area who have to ask permission to cut an agricultural plot. Everyone knows how far he may go to cut his plot: what belongs to his village and where another village's agricultural area begins. For example, as explained by someone from Christiaankondre: *“In the Erowarte area there is a creek named **Sjimiri-epih**; the people from Tapuku still have plots there. It forms a border with Galibi”*.

Everyone also knows to whom the agricultural plots belong. This is mostly because they have helped with the cutting or because they see who is working on the land. As far as the villages around Albina are concerned, the rule is that you cannot simply re-use someone else's old agricultural plot even if that person has not used it for a long time. You always have to ask that person in advance if he has no objection because he may still want to use the land for planting or for living on. It remains his property. In Galibi they are less strict because much more land is available. Abandoned agricultural plots may, after five or seven years, be used by others if they see that the person in question is active elsewhere: *“Afterwards you tell that person that you have planted on/cleared his old agricultural plot”*.

In general, both husband and wife are the owners of the agricultural plot, because a woman cannot create an agricultural plot without a man. But the woman is “in charge”. The man cuts an agricultural plot for his wife. He tells his wife: *“I will provide you with an agricultural plot”*. The woman has to cultivate the plot and keep it weeded and the man can help her with that, but she has the last word. The fact that the plot is considered the “domain” of the woman, becomes clear when the partners separate. In 90% of the cases she gets the land and people believe that it rightly accrues to her, especially if it is the man who leaves the village.



**Fruit or vegetables (such as this pineapple) may not be taken from agricultural plots by others
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Stemming from the individual possession of agricultural plots it follows that others may not enter someone else's plot without permission and remove crops or pick fruit. It sometimes happens that passing hunters pick pineapples or cut sugarcane. Most of the time this is tolerated. But on occasion someone does really steal from a plot. This is now happening more and more frequently, particularly for selling. People get really angry with the perpetrator, and if he is known, he will be reprimanded or the village administration will impose a fine upon him. It may also be discussed at a village assembly where everyone participates in the decision-making regarding the amount of the fine. As a result of the increase in thefts, more and more people are siting agricultural plots close to their homes, even in their own yards, so that they can keep better control over who enters it. Also, due to the increasing age of the population, agricultural plots are created closer to home than in the past because the people are not as able to cover great distances. Quarrels can also break out if old agricultural plots belonging to someone else are cleared, if newly planted crops are damaged or if traps have been placed near the plot.

Chapter 5 Hunting



Tapir
(Photo: A. Wolfe)

Hunting was originally one of the most important activities for the Kaliña and the Lokono, and people hunted far more frequently than nowadays. For almost every family, hunting was the main means of subsistence and they hunted every week, throughout the year, in both the dry and rainy seasons. Nowadays there is much less hunting because some people have paid jobs and as a result have less time. Another difference is that the hunters of the past shared the catch with the entire village, while nowadays the biggest part of the catch is sold. An exception is in Galibi (Christiaankondre and Langamankondre) where traditionally people used to fish more than hunt, but lately there are only a handful of hunters active. For the animals hunted, see Table 5.1.

Furthermore they hunt for birds such as the marai (E. marail) (K. *marai*, L. *maroedi*), *anamoe* (E. tinamous) (K. *njam*, L. *welemoenari*), toucan or koejake (K. *kujanke* L. *boeradi*), red ibis (K. *wala*), *powisi* (E. black currasow) (K. *Woko* L. *itsji*), parrot (L. *hoerijaka* K. *Koelewago*), and ravens (K. *kalalawa*), big pigeons (K. *weroeshi*) and aningas (K. *karara*).

Table 5.1 Game in the Lower Marowijne area

Surinamese/ English name	Kaliña name	Lokono name
pingo/white-lipped peccary	pendjo	kerong dodole
pakira/collared peccary	pakira, pagira	aboeja or matola
tapir/tapir	maipoeli/maipoeri	k'ama or firobero
deer (various kinds)	karjakoe, koesalf	kapasjiro, werebisjiro
kapasi/armadillo	manoe laimo (small kind), poeliadoe (medium-sized), kabasie (normal)	jesere or barakata
keskesi/capuchin (different kinds of monkey)	mekoe	foedi
howler monkey	alawada	hitoeli
hei/hare	oelana	laba
rabbit	akoelie	hoekoelero, hadoeri (small rabbit), koneso
jaguar	katoesji	kabadaro
kwaskwasi/coati	kwasi kwasi	kibihi
tamanua/giant ant-eater	wariri	wariti
kapoewa/capybara or water pig	kabiwa	
land turtle	wayamy	hikoeli
luisaard/sloth	koebirisji	

In the past game hunting was only intended for personal consumption. Goods were traded by barter. Nowadays whatever is not used by the household is sold. Big game in particular (peccaries, tapirs and deer) is sold, and the small animals are shared amongst the participating hunters as part of their livelihood. The big game animals are mostly sold on the French side (Saint-Laurent) because of the high returns in euros. One kilo of pingo yields on average about € 5.50. A hunter from Galibi says: *“With the income you can pay for the boarding school or school, especially if the child goes to school in Paramaribo. (Although money is also earned from the selling of fish, fruit, etc.) You can also vary the food available in the village. The villagers then do not need to eat only fish”*.

Parts of the wild animals are used for purposes other than food. Deer, pakira or pingo hides are used for the *sambura* (big drum). Pendants and necklaces are made from the teeth of different animals such as jaguars, tapirs, monkeys, rabbits, pingos or pakiras. Bird feathers (e.g. from parrots) are used for headdresses and ritual events; the down from the Egyptian vulture (K. *Anuwana*) is used during the mourning ceremony and is glued to the head of the person in mourning. Feathers from the marai (marail) or the gonini (harpy eagle) are also used. Certain parts of some animals also have powers of healing. For example, the larynx of the red howler monkey (*baboen gorogoro*) is used for stammering and for cases of severe coughing, for example whooping cough. The feathers of the anamoe (rails and crakes) are used for people with epilepsy. The antlers of the deer are also considered to have healing powers. If a baby has convulsions, the antlers are grated and mixed with milk.

In general, from April through August – the rainy season – people hunt less because of the heavy rain. An informant from Pierrekondre explained: *“if you go into the forest during the rainy season, it is dark and you have to watch out for snakes, for example”*. Also, if it rains you cannot hear the

wild animals approaching. It is difficult for the hunters during the rainy season, because this is also the mosquito season, so they prefer to go fishing. In the dry season (August–November) you can hunt better and for longer, because there is not much rain. A hunter from Tapuku explained: *“What I did during the dry season was to salt a lot of game, which I ate during the rainy season”*. On the other hand, the rainy season does have an advantage: the water level in the swamps and the creeks is high and the hunters can easily reach their hunting sites.

There is another reason why there is less hunting during the rainy season: from March through July/August, the animals have young or are pregnant. At this time the animals cannot walk far or move around in the forest and you hardly see them. The hunters wait until August, when the young

Box 5.1 Omakano

“When a Kaliña family member passes away, the surviving relatives of that family are bound to a certain ritual. This ritual starts eight days after the death of the member in question. This is the beginning of a process requiring much hard work. Money must be earned in order to provide the traditional requirements of such a death. Some family members will start mourning the deceased. In principle the first mourning period is held after six weeks. I say ‘in principle’ because many people are unable to afford the preparations within the proposed period. These ceremonies cost a lot of money.”

The Kaliña call the first mourning period *Omakano*. It is a precursor of the *Epekodono*. At the start, the audience is addressed by the village leader and possibly the oldest relative of the deceased. The men then play the *sambura* (drums) and the women the *karawasi* (see Box 7.3). The mourners may not dance to the *sambura*, only the *karawasi*. The songs played on both the *sambura* and the *karawasi* relate to the deceased. They are biographies of the deceased. In the morning some of the deceased's possessions, including clothes, are burned. The mourners then dance around the fire to the *karawasi*. Thereafter, to the accompaniment of the *karawasi*, the surviving relatives go and bathe in the river. When they return they sit and have their hair cut. After this, they are dressed and given all kinds of ornaments to wear. Now the *sambura* alone will be played to dance to. A mourning ceremony can last for two days until there are no drinks left. Thereafter the new mourning period starts and the mourners prepare for the big ceremony, the *Epekodono* (see Box 8.1)

By: Georgette Kumanajare

are big enough to move through the forest. The number of wild animals in a given area is very dependent on the seasons of the forest fruits, such as *awara*, *amapa*, *koem* or *koemoe* and *parata*. If there is no food, the animals will be far away. In the dry season the trees have no fruits which is why the animals move far away.

Hunting takes place both during the day and the night, depending on the hunter's preference. During the day you can hunt, for example, from six a.m. till eight p.m. The hunters also go on trips that last more than one day, particularly if they go to more distant areas and then they spend the night in a shelter. Nocturnal animals are the tapir, the deer, the hare, the armadillo, the nocturnal monkey (*K. koebala*). Therefore people hunt these animals at night. An exception is in Galibi, where people only hunt during the day.

Table 5.2 Hunting calendar (Bigiston)

xxxxx = many; x = few

Wild species	Long dry season	Short rainy season	short dry season	Long rainy season
<i>pingo</i> (white-lipped peccary)	xxxxx	xx	xxxx	x
<i>pakira</i> (collared peccary)	xxxxx	xxx	xxxx	x
deer	xxxx	x	xxx	xxx
<i>kapasi</i> (armadillo)	xxxxx	xxx	xxxx	x
rabbit	xxxxx	xxx	xxxx	x
hare	xxxxx	x	xxxx	x

Around 1950 the hunting calendar was introduced by the government. This indicates when one may and may not hunt, and is published every year in the newspaper. Everyone, including the indigenous people, must observe this calendar. The hunting calendar does not always correspond to the traditional hunting seasons, though. The people are now trying to work with the government's hunting calendar because for the last few years the Nature Conservation Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources (Natuur Beheer, NB) has had a field station at Alusiaka to control the hunters. *"If the people from the LBB [the Forest Service], the rangers, catch you with animals that are forbidden in that season, they seize everything, even your vehicle and you get a heavy fine"*, says one of the hunters interviewed. The ranger's checks can sometimes be avoided by selling the game informally, not in public, and by avoiding public roads and taking short cuts through the creeks. In Galibi the hunters have never been arrested or fined for hunting outside the hunting calendar's season.



Hunter from Erowarte with a deer
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Game population

According to the hunters, there is generally enough game but hunting has become more difficult and it is necessary to go deeper into the forest. For example, there is no game close to Pierrekondre, but it can be found nearer Wane Creek and between Wane Creek and Galibi. This is because very few people live there. The hunters say that the forest at Bigiston also has sufficient game, but again the animals are far away, deep in the forest.

“In the past there was game here and it was also close by, but now because of the noise of the big machines in the forest that are constructing roads to transport the logs from the forest and as there are also more hunters than in the past, you cannot find so much game nearby any more. . . Also, these days you don't find such big groups of pingos any more; in the past you had groups of ± 100-300 pingos. Now, if they hear one shot, they leave straight away whereas previously they stayed in the neighborhood”. (Hunter, Tapuku)

This is confirmed by a hunter from Pierrekondre: *“Nowadays there are far more hunters than in the past and the animals have also become smarter. When in the past you fired a shot, the other animals did not go away, they remained in the area, now if they hear a shot they run away very quickly. On occasions the animals would come right up to or even into the village”.* The fact that the animals are nowadays found in more remote places has made hunting harder and tougher. *“Most of the time, the pingos walk in the daytime and you have to be in good condition to run behind them or to lie in wait for them at another spot”.*



**Pakoeli – a favourite forest fruit
for many animals
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

For some hunters, the pleasure of the hunt has completely disappeared: *“I have to go ever deeper into the forest because there is a logging concession³² behind Erowarte. It is not at all usual to hunt in that area any more, because there is simply no game. Because all the fruit trees have been cut in the logging concession, the animals automatically escape deeper into the forest. The animals live off fruit trees”.*

The hunters also say that some species are diminishing in number. In the vicinity of Wane Creek, for example, there are fewer pingos. According to the hunters this is because Suralco is building roads in the Wane Creek area and also because of the logging activities there. As a result of the road construction, the noise of the heavy equipment and because all sorts of people are coming there to hunt, the game is retreating deeper into the forest. The inhabitants of all the

villages are in clear agreement on this. Also, in other areas where commercial logging activities are taking place, the game population is decreasing. Game is also less prevalent where trees that carry forest fruits are cut down, such as the *pakoeli* (sp. *Rheedia*), *bolletrie* (bullet wood/*balata*), *boskasjoen* (custard apple), or the *merrie*-tree.

Other animal species and birds that you come across less often in the forest are *baboen* (red howler monkey), *kes-kesi* (capuchin), *powisie* (black curassow), *kami-kami* (grey-winged trumpeter), *duikelaar* (anhinga, which still occurs in the swamps near Galibi) and *bos-doksi* (muscovy duck). Some birds have been over-hunted and use of the outboard motor may also have driven them away.

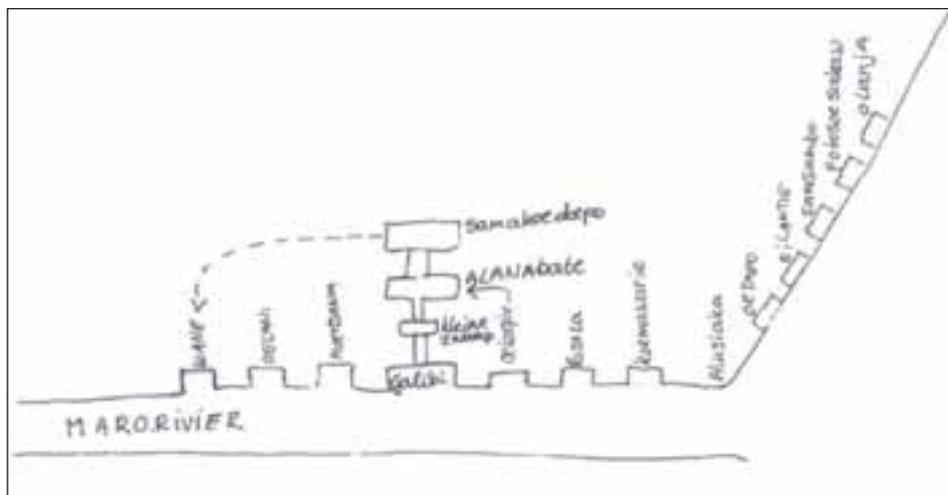
Hunting grounds

In principle, each village has its “own” hunting ground behind the village. Each village’s hunters know more or less where the boundaries lie. Through all their hunting activities they have a good knowledge of the forest. They tend not to hunt in another village’s hunting area because of the distance (for example, a hunter from Bigiston will not hunt behind Galibi) as they have to get home in time with their catch and because they are used to their own traditional hunting lines (forest paths made by hunters). They might get lost in other hunting grounds. According to most hunters the area behind their own village is big enough; it is not necessary to go elsewhere. But the boundaries

³² This case relates to a logging license held in the name of the late captain of the Maroon village of Bilokondre; also see Chapter 8 on logging.

between hunting grounds are based on informal agreements; there are no visible boundaries and the indigenous people are allowed to hunt wherever they wish to.

This rule comes down to the fact that the hunting grounds in Lower Marowijne are considered the common property of all the indigenous peoples of Lower Marowijne. The hunting grounds belong to the areas in which the indigenous peoples have traditionally been living. This means that they do not have to stop hunting when they reach the boundary of their village territory. As the captain of Marijkedorp said: *“If someone is tracking a pingo he is entitled to keep following it until he has shot it, even if the pingo stops right in front of my front door”*. However, if hunters want to hunt in an area that belongs to a village other than their own, they do have to inform the village leader. This applies not only to hunting, but to all activities in someone else’s area (e.g. logging and fishing). This practice serves particularly as a safety measure: if an individual were to get lost, they would know where to look for him. Access to hunting grounds does not apply to non-indigenous people, who have to get the explicit permission of the village administration.



Hunting grounds, Galibi
(Illustration by S. Oeloekanamoe)

Although, in principle, hunters can hunt wherever they want, in practice hunters from different villages prefer hunting in different areas. In general, the hunters remain close to where they live. For example, the men from Galibi hunt at **Wane Creek** and **Oelani**, which is known particularly for its clay and where people have also been living for a long time. They also often go to **Oeloesjie** (a creek near Christiaan Kondre at the end of the village where the creek flows into the swamps), **Alanabate** (which is accessible via the Oeloesjie creek and lies far behind the big swamps). In addition, the hunters also often go to **Prapi Busi**, known by the people from Galibi as **Samakoeoepo** (which is where a big Samaku was to be seen), an important place between Wane Creek and Alanabate near where Suralco is mining, and where, in the past a lot of people used to live. The hunters also have to stay overnight here. On the other side of the village, towards the coast, they hunt at **Masjipe Itjoeloe**, **Parara** (a creek), **Alusiaka**, **Oetapo-Atapaloekoe** (a place that dries out when the water level is low and where the Warana turtles lay their eggs), **Eilanti**, **Samsambo** (an important breeding site for birds), **Potosoesakaw** (known as Bigi Santi), and **Olanja** (see Figure, above). Nowadays they also go to a place they call **Pratie Watra** (watershed). This is very far away. Deep in the forest behind Oetapo is a place called **Pamasade**, where the hunters still go. The area around **Oetapo** used to be a very big forest, densely populated with game such as buffalo, deer and pingos. *“Buffalo could even be seen on the beach. If they were thirsty they would even drink seawater”*, says one of the hunters who used to go there often. Finally, there are the hunting grounds known as **Mati-emalembo** (the path used by the Maroons during the period of slavery), **Alanabate**, **Celina** (towards Wane Creek and Galibi, where there is a pond), **Waloemabate** (where there is a lot of *warimbo* – basketwork) and **Alakoerieserie bate** (*alakoerieserie* is used during festivals; it is

put on the eyebrows and cheeks). The hunters also come into the areas around Alfonsdorp. Hunters from Tapuku, Erowarte and Pierrekondre hunt in the vicinity of Wane Creek and also towards Alfonsdorp. Some go all the way to Moengo. They also often go to **Kanawa** or **Kanawabo**, a creek near **Atapiriri**. There is still a boat there that used to belong to the indigenous people, hence the name Canawanbo. At one time a lot of people lived there. The indigenous people would go there to hide from the white men or the man-eater.³³ Now that there is no game close to home, the hunters from Tapuku and Pierrekondre, for example, often have to go to **Atambo** (in the north) or **Kanawa** and **Wane Creek**, three to four hours' walk away.

People from Marijkedorp hunt in the forest behind the village, up to and beyond **Kanawa**, and close to Galibi. They also go by boat to **Wane Creek**. Wane Creek is an important hunting ground for the indigenous people of the Lower Marowijne.

In addition to hunting at Wane Creek, the hunters from Alfonsdorp also go to the area around Galibi, but mainly in **Patamaka**, between Alfonsdorp and Bigiston. Beyond the village territory are the hunting grounds of **Blaka Watra** (black creek), **Witte Kreek**, **Armata Kreek**, and **Kleine Blaka Watra**. The hunting grounds south of Alfonsdorp also extend close to the boundary of the Bigiston area. Other hunting grounds further to the east are **Bruinhart Busi** and **Ede Moiwana**. **Paloeloe** was a hunting area in the past.

The hunters from Bigiston generally stay in the vicinity of the village (behind the village). However, they sometimes go via the creeks to places that are further away, such as towards **Patamaka**, or else towards Galibi.

Hunting methods



Scaffolding erected by hunters
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Nowadays almost every hunter uses a hunting rifle. Traditionally hunters would use bows and arrows (L. *Sarapa*) or a lance (a type of spear). The advantage of the bow and arrow is that it makes no sound, but the rifle is quicker. The bow and arrow is rarely used now. What the hunters often do is to erect scaffolding (K. *soela doepo*) near fruit trees that are likely to attract game, and wait there till the animals come. They do this in particular for nocturnal animals, such as the tapir, deer, *kapasi* (armadillo) or hare. They suspend a hammock about 3m above the ground, and then wait for the animal to come so they can shoot it.

Some hunters use a *kion kion*, a flute made of *warimbo* leaves, for catching rabbits (K. *akoeli*).

In the past traps were also used, such as the *iselenga*-trap: a noose is made from a liana which snares, for example, deer walking under the trap. Another was the *ponga*-trap; a heavy log put in the path of the animals and which would then fall on the animals passing by. These methods are no longer used. Before the indigenous people had rifles, they also used dogs to head off an animal and drive it into a corner, where the hunters would stab it with a pointed piece of wood such as *krapa oedoe* (crab wood).

³³ For information about the man-eater, see the history of Bigiston (Chapter 2).

In Bigiston some of the men hunt alone, but they tend to prefer to hunt in groups: *“It is not advisable to hunt alone”*, as one informant from Bigiston said. But the group must not be too big, because the bigger the group, the smaller the share per person. The more people, the more noise, and then the animals keep away. The usual system is to go hunting in the forest with two to three men, and to spread out having agreed when and where to meet again. Contrary to this, in the old days in Galibi, people used to hunt a great deal in groups, but nowadays they prefer to hunt alone. It also depends on a hunter’s personal preference. As a hunter from Erowarte said: *“If I go with someone else I am not free; I constantly have to keep an eye on that person”*.

In general only men hunt. Women usually stay home and clean and cook the catch. However, on occasions, hunters do take their wives along. According to an informant from Pierrekondre, both his father and mother would go hunting: they would separate in the forest and meet after three to six hours at an agreed spot. An informant from Marijkedorp also used to go hunting with his wife from time to time: *“Her job was to steer the boat with a paddle and above all to make no noise. I was in front with my bow and arrow or rifle, ready to shoot”*.



**Captain Zaalman shows the path of an armadillo
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

The hunters have an extensive knowledge of the forest. From experience they know, for example, which are the best spots for hunting. Most often these are also the places where forest fruits fall, such as *podosiri* and *maripa*, and which are eaten extensively by the game. In addition, the animals can usually be found on flat ground or at the upper courses of the creeks, but not in hilly places. Indigenous men learn right from childhood how a hunter has to behave: *“If you are deep in the forest, you may not make any noise, you have to walk quietly, sometimes crawl, and listen where the game are”*.

Furthermore, it is not allowed to wear perfume, laugh aloud or even satisfy nature’s call. Nor is it permitted to bathe in the creek in blood-stained clothes. And a hunter must be able to read the ‘signs’ in the forest. In other words: to sense, see or smell that game is near. A hunter from Galibi says:

“You do not become a hunter just like that. You have to be fit – physically and mentally. You must be able to identify everything. You have to know the forest: the animals’ tracks and also their scent. Your eyes and ears must function really well. You have to understand nature. The hunter is at risk the moment he enters the forest”.

An animal can, for example, “betray” itself by letting its body rub the trunk of a tree or by rolling the leaves (by way of cleaning itself). The hunters recognize this immediately and can then deduce from fresh traces on the trunk whether, for example, a pingo is nearby.

It sometimes happens that a hunter gets lost during the hunt. He will then first check whether he can find his way back via the “line” he has cut. If that does not work and it is already late, he will look for a fallen tree and spend the night there. In the morning he will look at the rising sun and will then know exactly where to go to. If the hunter loses his way during the day, he can also look at the clouds and the wind (but: *“sometimes the wind changes and then you get even more lost”*). The best are the sun and the moon, if there is a moon. If a hunter does not return, the others will start looking for him. But they believe that *“a real hunter should be able to go into the forest for about two to three days and still find his way back. If you are not a good hunter you will not find your way back and the others will come and look for you”*.



Tracks of a jaguar (left) and a cayman
(Photos: C. de Jong)

Hunting rituals and customs

From early times hunters have followed different traditional practices to ensure that they get a good catch and that everything goes well for them in the forest.³⁴ Before the hunter leaves his home and goes into the forest, it is customary to sprinkle him with water and to talk to the spirits that they may remove all evil from his path and that he may have good fortune. Others call this “*praying to the ones that give luck and protection*”.

In general, the influence of Christianization, as introduced by the mission in the 20th century, has brought about big changes, and partial disappearance of these traditional and spiritual customs. Expressions of “heathen” behavior are rejected, having been “unlearned” a long time ago. Christianized indigenous people therefore tend to smile when talking of the old customs, as if referring to “superstitions from earlier times”. But nonetheless these customs are certainly far from extinct. Sometimes a combined method is used: “*In my case I say a prayer as a Christian, and as an indigenous person I ask the invisible people in the forest to stand by me so that I have a good catch and return home safely,*” says a hunter from Marijkedorp. According to a hunter from Alfonsdorp: “*You have to pray and ask Adajali (Lokono for God) for a good catch*”.



Hunter Marcel from Marijkedorp
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Then there are also the omens that hunters use to determine when they will go hunting. For example, if a hunter has a good dream in the presence of a woman, that means he will find game. They also look for premonitions from animal (bird) species. Hunters from various villages also said that they never tell their wives that they are going to go hunting. That does not bring luck. A hunter from Erowarte said: “*I tell my wife that I am going to take a walk in the forest*”.

³⁴ Some hunters apply secret knowledge to ensure a good catch, for example, by using a certain plant. The communities have decided not to publish information on this subject.

Chapter 6 Fishing

Fishing is an important source of subsistence for the Kaliña and the Lokono of the Lower Marowijne. This is inevitable, surrounded as they are by so much water. They fish in the river, the sea, the creeks and the swamps. On average they fish three to four times a week, both at night and during the day. The frequency depends on how good the catch is. If they catch a lot of fish, they do not go the following day. If the catch is small they go fishing again the next day. The frequency is also determined by the living conditions of the fisherman (whether or not he needs extra money). According to the fishermen themselves, this can play an major role.



Many fishermen sell their catch at the market at St. Laurent (French Guiana)
(Photo: K. Neke)

Fish is caught for personal consumption as well as for commercial purposes. If a lot of fish have been caught, one portion of the catch is kept to be eaten and the remaining large fish are sold on the other side of the river in French Guiana, in Albina or locally to other villagers. If the fish is sold the money is used to provide for their needs, for example to buy new nets, or fuel, a new outboard motor or a new boat. Fish is prepared in different ways; it can also be smoked (K. *kambo*, L. *djibalidaso*) or salted (K. *salaloe*, L. *kabhadatohimé*). Not only fresh, but also roasted and salted fish are sold.

The fishermen sometimes fish alone, but they also fish with two or three others or with family members. Both men and women fish, although more often it is men. When men and women fish together it is usually with a drift net. The men throw the nets and the women steer the boat with the paddle or vice versa. The woman needs to learn to cast the nets because in the event that the man is no longer there, she will have to manage on her own. The men sort the fish for sale. This is because the men mainly sell the fish straight away before heading home. In the home the women cook the fish for personal consumption.



Roasted fish at Albina market
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Seasons

Fishing takes place almost the whole year round, although the fish populations in the wetlands may differ depending on the season and the fishing ground. According to a fisherman from Bigiston, April and May are the best months for fishing: “*In the rainy season there are many fish*”. In the rainy season the fishing is good in the swamps and the creeks. Water comes in and covers the swamps, bringing certain types of fish that only come during the rainy season. In the creeks you also find certain fish that you do not see during the dry season.

Conversely, in Erowarte and Tapuku the dry season is a time of plenty: “*In the dry season there are many fish – you can find all kinds of fish – and in July we find very few*” (fisherman from Erowarte). A fisherman from the neighboring village of Tapuku confirms this: “*In the rainy season there are few and at the end of the dry season many. If the dry season, however, lasts too long (longer than normal) then there are also few fish. Then there is a greenish floating sort of slime on the water*”. The people from Erowarte and Tapuku mainly fish in the river.

Table 6.1 Seasonal fish catch in Erowarte, Tapuku and Pierrekondre

(xxxx = many fish; x = few)

	Short dry season	Short rainy season	Long dry season	Long rainy season
creek	xx	xx	xxxx	x
swamp	x	x	xxxx	x
river	xxx	xxx	xxxx	xxxx

When the dry season starts and very little rainwater enters the river, a muddy stream flows in from the sea, followed by salt water. The river fish do not like this and swim up the river. In the dry season sea fish can be seen in the river, most of the time non-scaly (slippery) fish. At one particular place at certain times there are a lot of fish. It is possible that there are so many fish at Erowarte and Tapuku in the dry season because it takes the fish some time to cover that distance. Only in the event of a major drought does the muddy, salty stream reach Bigiston, but once there, its impact is less. In the main, the stream only reaches as far as Albina. Over this period the people only need to fish during the day, because they can catch all they need. In periods of over-abundance, the fish can be stored in old freezers with ice which enables the fishermen to stay away from home and continue fishing for a few days without the fish beginning to rot.

Table 6.2 Fish species by season (river fish, Bigiston)

(xxxxx = many fish; x = few)

Fish species	Long dry season Aug–Sept–Oct	Short rainy season	Short dry season	Long rainy season April–May
<i>anjoemara</i> (giant trahira)	xxxx	xx	xxxxx	xxx
<i>trapoen</i> (tarpon)	xx	xxx	xx	x
<i>koebi</i> (pacora)	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx
<i>pakoe</i>	x	xx	xxxx	xx
<i>toekoenarie</i>	xxxx	x	xxxx	x
sardine	xxxxx	xx	xxxxx	xx
<i>kokko</i> or <i>kwasi</i>	xxxx	xx	xxxx	xxx

NB: *Koebi* can be found throughout the year. From July to September it can be caught with a fishing line, until the muddy water comes up the river. Thereafter it can only be caught with drift nets. A *Koebi* that has been line caught is popular because it is fresher than one that may have been in a drift net the whole evening.

In the creeks and the river the fishing season is also determined by the flowering season of certain tree species that grow along the banks, such as podosiri (*K. wasai*, *L. manaka*), baboonwood (*K. waloesji*), and Mauritius palm (*K. melesji*, *L. ité boom*) from which fruits fall and feed the fish.

Swamp fish are mostly caught in the long dry season, because they are easily caught by rod and (small) nets when the swamps are almost dry. Fish also come into the swamps that are not there during the rainy season.



The fruit of the Mauritius palms are eaten by fish and by birds
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

The fishermen have to adapt their fishing habits to the position of the moon and the height of the water. A fisherman from Erowarte explained: *“If the water is too low, we call it low season (Sr. lesi watra), when there is no strong current. Lesi watra (lazy water) occurs when there is (almost) no moon to be seen after full moon. Then the best time to fish is at night because the fish cannot see in the dark. During full moon there is a spring tide. At that time the water is turbid and the fish don’t see the plastic net. During spring tide it’s best to fish in the daytime because at night, with the full moon, the water is lit up”.*

At *lesi watra* (the first and last quarters of the moon) nets are pulled along the river and the *tramail* is anchored (see below).

Table 6.3 The influence of the moon on the water level (Erowarte)

Season	Water level	Position of the moon	Best time to fish
Low season	<i>Lesi watra</i> (no strong current)	Dark moon	At night
High season	Spring tide (high water)	Full moon	During daytime

The fish population in the sea and in the Marowijne estuary remains more or less the same throughout the year. Seasons do not apply there (see Table 6.4). People do fish less during the dry season, though, which is when they fish in the creeks and the swamps. Also, during sea turtle season, people fish less at night because it is highly likely that the sea turtles will end up in the nets: *“It’s only in sea turtle season that it’s very bothersome to fish at night because the animals get stuck in your net, the net turns upside down and there is every chance that you’ll lose your net or that it’ll be destroyed by the sea turtles”.*

Table 6.4 Seasonal catch (Christiaankondre)

	Short dry season	Short rainy season	Long dry season	Long rainy season
creek	xx	x	xxxx	x
swamp	xx	x	xxxx	x
river	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx
sea	xx	xxxx	xx	xxxx

Fish population

In general the current fish population is described as “*not all that big, but reasonable*”. According to a fisherman from Christiaankondre there are still enough fish because “*a fish lays thousands of eggs, for example the aarde fish (trench mullet) (K. palasjie)*”. During the season you can always find enough fish, both in the sea and the river, and in the swamps and creeks. The most important sea and river fish that are fished for in Galibi are *bang-bang* (sea koebi, K. *akoepa*), *aarde* fish (K. *parasie*), *kweriman*, sea *krobia* or *merkifisi* (Sr. *kraw-kraw*), *barbaman* (K. *sjali-sjali*), christ fish (K. *kupila*), catfish (K. *wakaloe*), *kubi*, *trapun*, *weti-weti* and *kandra-tiki*. They also catch big fish like *jarabaka* (K. *kalalawaimo*).

Table 6.5 Creek and swamp fish (Alfonsdorp)

Surinamese name	Lokono name
krobia	weshi
datra-fisi	shi-bali
pataka	hoeri
walapa	hoerisjirie/ jaraw
creek piren (piraña)	waboerè
noja	himieri
saprapu	koeladiroi
logo-logo	koelibiro
(sokè) kwie-kwie	kariwaroe
sriba	serebé
dyaki	kassi

Table 6.6 River fish (Bigiston)

Surinamese name	Kaliña name
waraku	walaku
kwana	kwasjimama
moroko	merokow
maka fisi	maka fisi
pawlobi	toboloega
krumata	koeliemjada
paku	pakoese
tukunari	malisjaba
spikri-kati	oeloewie
anjumara	aimjala
trapun	abalitja
kokko or kwasima	koelawa

There are certain fish species, though, that are hardly seen any more, such as the *granmorgoe* (jew fish) (K. *muruwaimo*) which is seen less and less, and the sawfish (K. *karari*) that used to be found in the estuary. The elders say that these fish have gone deep into the sea. According to a fisherman from Erowarte it is also harder to find *koemaroe*, a very expensive fish. The *jarabaka* is also decreasing. According to informants from Christiaankondre this is because fishermen from Guyana come a long way into the Marowijne River to fish with nets that are kilometers long. Some fishermen say that certain fish have decreased because there were fewer fishermen in the past than nowadays. Now there are (too) many fishermen. There are also fewer fish in certain places, such as where there are commercial logging activities (and the fruit trees that feed the fish are cut down) and where there is bauxite and gold mining.

Other factors have also affected the fish population. In the past there were no outboard motors. According to an informant from Erowarte the water was cleaner then than now. “*Because the outboard motor pollutes the water with the fuel*”. They also blame the decline of the fish population on the logging activities: “*In the past there were.... more trees along the river and there was baboonwood [K. warushi]. The fish like the seeds from these trees. The Maroons cut these trees down and make plywood from them. That is why there are so few of these trees left*”. Another threat is pollution of the water by all kinds of waste, such as old clothes, plastic bottles and footwear, so there are far fewer fish.

A fish that is not eaten is the *bosrokoman* (puffer) (K. *tamejakoe*) because it is poisonous. The needle fish is not eaten either but is used: the backbone is burned and crushed finely and given to girls during their first period, to reduce its duration.

Fishing techniques

The Lokono and the Kaliña have different fishing techniques. They mostly use the drift net (*follet*). Traditional methods are the *baksi* (K. *tamboe*), the fyke (L. *pardoro*), *udu olo* (L. *Adaloko*), *seti-uku*, *dyompo-uku* (K. *selenga*), and *nak' watra* (K. *toena epokele*).

- With *seti-uku* about 100 lengths of line (60cm long) each with a hook and bait, are fastened to a liana or a *moko-moko*. The following morning the fish are removed.
- *Dyompo-uku* is also a line with hook and bait. It is fastened to a solid, flexible stick. It is placed in the creek like a bow and when the fish bites the stick rises and the fish hooks itself.
- *Adaloko* is a hollowed-out tree trunk, for example a *podosiri* trunk, with an opening on one side. At low tide the trunks are lifted up and there are often fish such as *krobia*, *datra*, *kwi-kwi*, *logo-logo* and *noja* inside.
- The *pardoro* is a fyke net that works like a mousetrap. It has a lid in which bait is placed; when the fish touches the bait, the lid shuts.
- The *baksi* is made of bamboo, *bogroemaka* wood and *kamina* string.
- *Nak' watra* means knocking of water. Two men tie a circular net between two sticks and then hit the water so that the fish get frightened and swim into the net. There are certain times (when there are a lot of *pawloebie* (K. *toboloega*)) when you can go out in your boat, hit the water and the *pawloebie* jump into the boat.
- Fishing with a rod is also very common (L. *badiri* and *balakaro*; K. *tabene*).



Fishing with a rod is a frequently used technique
(Photo: C. de Jong)

The different techniques can be used simultaneously as an interview with a fisherman shows: “I mostly go fishing with my family in the morning. We usually go early in the morning, from 6 to 2 pm; after that the fish do not bite. At night I go with three others to put out a *baksi* for the fish that mainly move around or search for food at night. At night we use the *dyompo-uku*, the *baksi* and the *pardoro*. At 5 am the fish are collected from these different fishing methods”. Fishing takes place during both low and high tides. At spring tide you cannot fish with a rod, so the drift net is used.

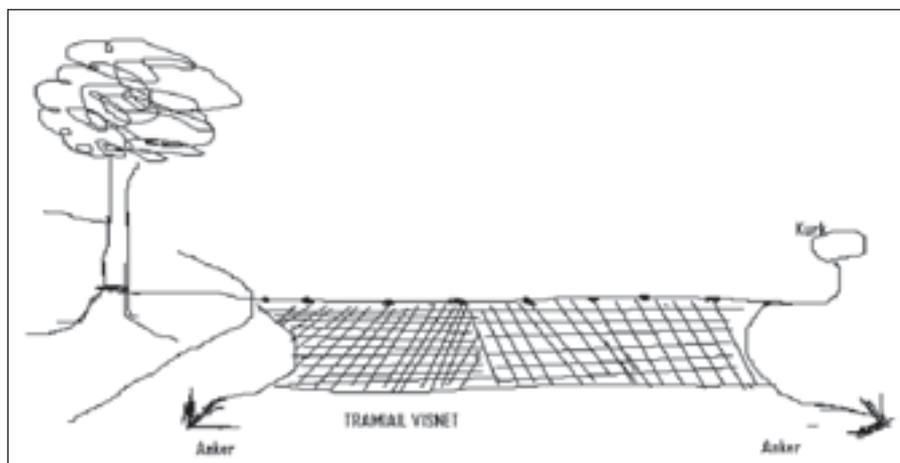
Table 6.7 Seasonal fishing methods (Christiaankondre)

	Short dry season	Short rainy season	Long dry season	Long rainy season
Drift net (<i>follet</i>)	xxx	xxxx	xxx	xxxx
Rod (k. <i>tabene</i>)	x	x	x	x
Fish hooks (k. <i>palan</i>)	x	x	x	x

A method that is now seldom used is the *palan*. This is a 50-60 m line, with baited fishhooks along its entire length. In the old days the line was made from the leaves of a certain species of pineapple (K. *kulawa*). When used in a creek the line is fastened to two sticks. In the river it needs a long stick on either side, anchored in deep water with a cork above to mark where the *palan* is. In the sea larger hooks are used.

Different kinds of nets can be used for fishing. There is the drift net, a plastic net, and the tramail. The latter is a modern, French brand of net. A fisherman from Erowarte explains:

The net has two anchors. One side of the net is fastened to a tree and the other side is placed in the water (underwater). The net consists of two sides. One half has large mesh to catch big fish and the other half has fine mesh to catch small fish. At the far end of one side of the net there is a cork as big as a ball (soccer ball). At the bottom of the net there are two anchors, these are cast into the water so that the net can float on one spot.



Tramail fishing net
(Illustration by G. Watamaleo)

Fishing techniques no longer in use

In the past people also used to fish with a bow and arrow. They would fish from the banks of the river and creeks. According to an informant from Erowarte, they would also fish at night with a *lancer* (a kind of harpoon or spear). The fish would come to the banks at night to sleep and would then be caught. So that they could fish in the dark, they would use a *toelie* (K), a torch made from burning dry *komboe* branches. Nowadays they use a flashlight. In the old days they would close off a creek with the *pari*. This was woven from strips of *prasara* wood fastened together with *kamina* string. Creeks would be sealed off with the *pari* during high water. At low water, the fish remaining behind would be caught. This method was replaced by the fishing net.

Nor do people nowadays use *koetin*, which in the past was the most frequently used fishing technique. This was a small net with very fine mesh, which would be placed along the shore on the mud banks in specific fishing grounds. During high tide all kinds of fish would go into the net and would then be unable to escape during low tide. Consequently any fish that were not needed, as well as small fish, would die. Another reason for not using the *koetin* any longer is that nature has changed. Fishermen from Galibi explained: “*Nowadays there are hardly any mud banks and this method can only be used on mud banks*”.

Techniques for stunning

The Kaliña and the Lokono have special fishing techniques, in which they use certain plants to stun the fish. These intoxicating substances are poisonous but do not affect the fish; the stunned fish can therefore simply be eaten. All of these plants are permitted to be grown, but for personal use only. It is forbidden to sell them at the market. They can, however, be bartered.

The most well known of these plants is *neku*. This was and still is the most used. Only the stalks are used, not the leaves.

Another intoxicating substance is *koenami*, a small tree, which is also grown specifically for this purpose. The leaves are crushed. Sometimes, for use as bait they are mixed with cassava to which dry, burnt and crushed Mauritius palm branch is added. Another way to prepare it: “*you use the seeds and the flowers and crush them together with a stamper (ako), and you scatter this in the creek*”. The fish that eat this are stunned and come to the surface. You have to work fast to catch

them because they swim and jump around and sink to the bottom when they die. They are scooped out of the water with a *kurkuru*.

One other intoxicant is *koenapaloe*. This plant contains a sort of milk that is very poisonous. It was and is, therefore, hardly ever used by the indigenous people. A large number of young stalks with leaves are wrapped in *paloeloe* (*Heliconia* sp.) leaves. This package is put in the creek and then the men prick it with sharp sticks. As a result the leaves tear and after a while the milky liquid can be seen. When pricking the leaves one should take care that the milk does not make contact with the eyes. *Koenapaloe* does not work quickly, but lasts a lot longer. After using *koenapaloe* there will be no fish in the creek for some time.



Neku
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

One more intoxicating substance is *asietjoena* (*K*) *jorokoena* (*L*); the seeds and roots are used. The roots are finely crushed just like the *neku*, and then sunk in the creek. “*In the short and long dry season you can’t fish with hooks because the fish do not bite. Then you can use jorokoena*”, an informant from Alfonsdorp explains.



**Researcher Georgette Kumanajare points out
koenapaloe in Bigiston**
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Then there is the *driekanti*, or the black forest liana. This is crushed and then put into flowing water. The fish jump out of the water “*like drunkards*”, and they land with their heads in the mud and can be picked up just like that. The indigenous people know exactly how much to use. This method is only applied in small creeks, or a side creek, and only that section is treated.

None of these stunning methods is used very often any more. One reason is that they have been replaced by other fishing techniques (such as nets). What is more, some of the plants only occur deep in the forest and are hard to find. Another factor is that these techniques make all the small fish die, which is why in Galibi, for example, the use of stunning techniques is forbidden (see Chapter 9 on this topic).

Rules and practices when fishing

An important rule is that wherever you go fishing, you have to keep the environment clean. According to an informant, there are invisible beings that see everything: “*Nature has life and that should be respected*”. Fishermen may not, for example, urinate in the water or satisfy nature’s calls. They may not curse during fishing, allow fish blood to enter the creek, or throw dishwater, pepper, oil or fish remains into the creek. Nor may they throw fish intestines into the water, otherwise, as they say, this will chase the other fish away. These have to be buried or left out for the vultures. This rule also applies to the sea.

Women who are menstruating may absolutely not come near the water. The water spirits (*okojoemo*) will become very angry; the smell of blood makes them angry. A fisherman may not fish for eight days after his wife has given birth (nor may he hunt or go to his agricultural plot).



Children from Galibi
(Photo: K. Neke)

Before the fishermen leave home, they ensure that they are well prepared. This means: taking snake medicine, taking along food, salt, fish hooks and matches as well as a good rifle, ammunition, a machete and a knife, and a flashlight. Before leaving they say a prayer. In this respect it is the same with the hunters; Christianization has had a great influence. For example, a fisherman from Erowarte said: *“In the past I did not do anything, but now I ask – I pray to – God that he will bring me luck and guide me to a good catch”*. A fisherman from Tapuku also indicated that he no longer follows tradition: *“Yes, there are customs but I do not follow them. The only thing I do is pray for a good catch and for protection on the water”*.

Fishing grounds

In principle, every fishing ground in the Lower Marowijne region is freely available to all the fishermen from the eight indigenous villages, although each village has its own traditional fishing ground. Fishermen from the villages around Albina go particularly to the creeks in the local neighborhood, but also in the direction of Galibi, Wane Creek, Bigiston and French Guiana. The fishermen from Alfonsdorp fish in creeks such as Blaka Watra, Witi-Watra, Kleine Blaka-Watra, Neger Creek, or Moi Wana. They also often go to Wane Creek. People from Bigiston fish in the creeks between Bigiston and **Pegoto** near the Armina Falls. According to them this is the area that their ancestors also used. In addition they fish near the islands in the river.

Fishermen from Galibi fish in the estuary of the Marowijne River and along the Atlantic coast. They often go to **Baboensantie** (K. **Oetapo - Ataparuku**) and around the **Wia Wia Bank** (K. **Wesji Wisji Bapo**). They also fish in the swamps there, and near **Bigi Santi**. They do also fish on the other side, in French Guiana. But, as a fisherman from Christiaankondre says, *“Up to 1970 we, as indigenous people, fished everywhere. We went to all the places we wanted to. Since then things have changed, because nowadays you cannot just go over to the French side or to places where fishing is not permitted without a license, passport, and the like”*. Also, the arrival of forest wardens from the Department of Natural Resource Management who monitor sea turtles in the Galibi and Wia-Wia nature reserves, restrict the fishermen:

We, as people from Galibi, have even become afraid to put up our fishing shelters on the beach and to stay there for a few days as we did in the past, since it was better for us because of the distance from Galibi to the sea. This is not done any more, not since the foresters have been coming here (to Babunsanti and the surrounding area) as they suspect the indigenous people of stealing the sea turtles' eggs.

Chapter 7 Use of non-timber forest products

In addition to making it possible to cultivate crops, hunt and fish, the forest also provides food in the form of forest fruits and materials for a variety of utensils. This chapter describes a number of these uses. It is not the intention to review all the plants and animals used by the indigenous people as this would take some years of study, but those that are most important and the manner in which they are used will be discussed.

Forest fruits

The fruits listed in Table 7.1 are gathered both for personal use and for commercial purposes (for selling).

Awara is picked in the forests behind the villages, in the agricultural plots and along the roadsides in the villages. In awara season the fruit is found everywhere. *“If you drive along the ‘Oost-west verbinding’ you’ll see awara everywhere”*.

Podosiri and kumbu occur in many places: in the forest at Marijkedorp, higher up around Papatamkondre and Bigiston, and on the other side of the river (French Guiana). The palms are also found at Galibi and Oelani. Yet our informants indicate that it has become more difficult to find podosiri and kumbu and they have to go deeper into the forest. *“Demand has grown for podosiri and kumbu and a lot of it is sold”*, says one informant. But deep in the forest near Marijkedorp there is still a lot of podosiri and kumbu to be found.

Fruits such as the forest apple, redi udu and maripa can still be easily found. Tawaru, a pink, sweet forest fruit is no longer readily found because the trees are logged for housing.

In the wetlands there are no forest fruits. There you find morisi (the fruit of the Mauritius palm).



Awara palm at Galibi
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Table 7.1 Fruits gathered (Marijkedorp)

Fruit	Lokono	Kaliña	Use
awara (peewah)		awala	food/drink (<i>awara oko</i> ; awara juice)
podosiri	manaka	wasai	food/drink
kumbu	lo	koeme	food/drink; there are different kinds (such as padawa)
busi apra (forest apple)	pera		food
a yellow forest fruit	pakuri	pakuri	food
redi udu (green/pink forest fruit)			food
maripa	paripa	maripia	food
	tawaru		

Table 7.2 Seasonal forest fruits (Marijkedorp)

Fruits	Short dry season	Long rainy season	Long dry season	Short rainy season
	Feb, March, April	May, June, July	Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov	Dec, Jan
awara	xxxx	x	x	x
podosirie	xxxx	xxxx	xx	x
kumbu	xxxx	xxxx	xx	x

People usually go in groups to gather fruits in the forest, because the fruits are heavy to carry. One informant from Marijkedorp said: “*In the past men and women would go into the forest together, but nowadays only the men go into the forest*”. However, in Galibi, for example, men and women go with their family or in a group. The men climb the trees if they are not too tall. If the trees are very tall and narrow they are cut down. The fruits are carried home in a *kurkuru* or *mutete*. Podosiri trees regrow once they are cut and produce their own small plants. Kumbu, on the other hand, will not grow back once it has been cut down, which is why kumbu is now very hard to find.



Gathering forest fruits in the Wane Creek area
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

To make juice from podosiri, the fruits are put in a pot with warm water. The water should not be too hot, or the fruits become hard. The warm water is poured off. Then the fruit is pounded with a stamper (the elders squeeze it by hand). The skin and seeds are removed. It may be necessary to sieve it too. Then it is ready and you can enjoy a delicious drink.



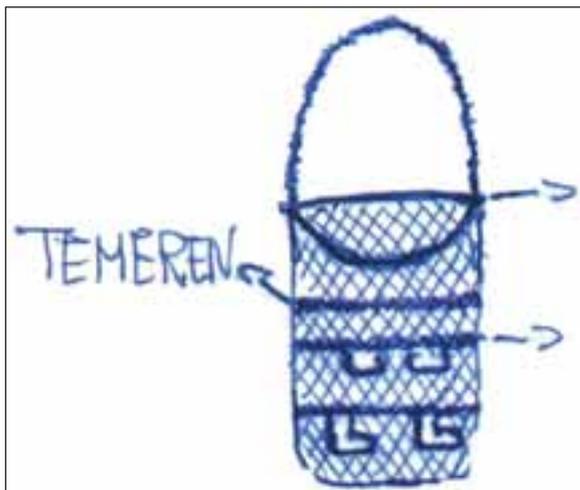
Awara and podosiri are popular palm fruits
(Photos: E.R. Kambel)



Weaving

The Kaliña and Lokono have their own weaving techniques. Traditionally, weaving is used for making various utensils. In Kaliña, weaving is called *temeren*, which means “written”, referring to the writing and/or colours in the design, with images of all kinds of creatures such as birds and fish. Materials for weaving include: warimbo, awala-alempo (top of the young awara palm), kamina (a forest liana; K. *kereresjimo*) and the top of the Mauritius palm (K. *meresji alempo*).

There are two kinds of warimbo: *waluma* and *tumutu*. *Waluma* has long leaves, whereas *tumutu* has a thicker stalk and big leaves. Warimbo grows in swampy places, along the water's edge.



Pasua and *warimbo (waluma)*
(Illustration by S. Majarawai,
photo: C. de Jong)

Objects that are made of *warimbo*:

- *manaré* (L. *mokoro* or *tjiriki*): a sieve made in two ways: one has bigger holes for *kasiri*, the other with smaller holes is used for cassava
- container or basket (K. *kurkuru*). The bark of the *ingi udu* (K. *omose*) is used to make the wide strap that is put around the forehead when carrying the basket. The basket is woven from *kamina*
- *matapi* (cassava squeezer) is made from the thicker-stemmed large-leaved *warimbo (tamutu)*;
- *pasua* – a kind of carrying case (see picture)
- *makoki* – a wallet
- *jamatu* – a square box used by the shaman, also called a case, in which he keeps his instruments such as the *maraka* (large rattle)
- *mutete* – a kind of rucksack
- the *kweke* – a bag that tends to be used for carrying crabs.

The following are made from the *awara alempo* (young *awara* tops):

- fans (K. *wori-wori*) – used when baking cassava bread. Different shapes can be woven into the fans, such as “rabbit teeth” (K. *akoeli ijere*)
- *matutu* or *matatu* – small container for toiletries
- *enupigiri* – sieve with finer mesh than the *manaré*.

Finally, *kurkuru* and *mutete* are also made from *kamina*. Because this liana lasts a long time, *kurkuru* made from *kamina* are more expensive than those made from *warimbo*.

Gathering and using the materials

An informant from Erowarte explains: “You need 25 pieces of about 1 meter in length to weave a manaré. They have to be just ripe otherwise they will break quickly (rot through). You also use a kind of hard but narrow wood, called kumbutasi for the sides”. After cutting the material, it is carried over the shoulder in a bundle. First of all it is cleaned by scraping (or grating) the warimbo’s green outer part with a knife. It then turns white. The scraped warimbo is then washed in the river.



Working with warimbo
(Photo: K. Neke)

Before starting the weaving the warimbo is split and stretched or cut open and cut into fine strips; the pulp is then removed leaving the strips. The strips are then placed on a board so that they can be woven. The warimbo can also be tied in the middle with a piece of rope so that part of the warimbo can be painted black. In the past this was done with *tabuopo*; nowadays a kind of tar is used (*colta* or *palamani*). This way, part is left blank, so it becomes black and white.

Experienced weavers do not take long to produce a manaré: “If you weave constantly you are finished within one day, but as I take my time I need two days”, a weaver from Erowarte told us. It also takes about two days to weave the carrying container (*kurkuru*) and the fans. The same applies for other woven items: a large item takes two days and a small basket only one day.

Weaving is a man’s job. As the men sometimes have to go a long way to look for warimbo and then carry it back – sometimes in bundles two meters long – gathering warimbo can be heavy work for women. In addition to working the agricultural plots, the women were and still are more active with pottery (*olinio*), see below.



The fan (*wori-wori*) is used, among other things, when baking cassava
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

The basket, the sieve, the squeezer and the fan are all needed by the women for processing the cassava. In general, they decide when the men need to make utensils for the house. “I’ll make a manaré if I get an order or if my wife needs a new one,” says one of the weavers. The sieve, the carrying container, the squeezer and the fan last for about six months, when new ones have to be made. They are used daily. Only the *jamatu* (the shaman’s box) lasts as long as 20 years because it is kept inside the house. Although woven goods are made for personal use, the majority are intended for sale. Good weavers receive regular orders.

One informant said that he gathers weaving materials about once a month, and this will then be sufficient for him. Weaving is not a seasonal activity, but it is very important that the materials do not get too dry.

Sources of weaving materials

According to our informants there is still enough warimbo to be found. The only thing is that you need to know where to go. One of the places where the weavers from Erowarte go to get warimbo is north of the village, at **Atapiriri**. The weavers from Galibi go to the **Alusiaka** forest (see diagram) where a lot of warimbo grows. There is also a lot of warimbo in the Galibi and Ulani forests.

The gathering areas are situated outside the village nucleus and are part of the joint (collective) territories of the indigenous people of the surrounding area. Anyone is free to go where he or she wishes to gather the materials needed. When going outside your own village, it is common to notify the authorities of the village you are nearest to. *“If you go to Marakam (French Guiana), you have to stop at Posoli to notify them that you are going further on”* a weaver from Langamankondre explained.

Once you have cut the warimbo, even if it is in an area other than your own, it is yours and you can take it home. Once something has been cut, it means that it belongs to somebody. This emerged from one informant’s explanation of how conflicts can arise:

“What happens sometimes is that you have been into the forest (perhaps a long way in) and as your load is heavy you leave it somewhere, to collect a few hours later. This can create quarrels if, in the meantime, someone else finds the load and takes it away. This then gets reported to the village leader. The person who took the materials has to pay you back or go and look for new materials for you”.



**Reinard Tapoka, the well known weaver from Christiaankondre
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Box 7.1 “A good man must be able to do everything”

In the past marriages were arranged by the parents. Girls and boys did not fall in love, their parents found partners for them. And you were not allowed to refuse, although sometimes the parents did respect the opinion of the children.

At 3 in the morning the boy’s parents would go to a *piay* to get *oelemari* (a cigar). They would then go to the girl’s parent, who would not know why they were suddenly receiving visitors at 3 am but would think that it may concern one of their daughters. They would make a fire, some tea and talk for a little and only if the girl’s parents dared would they very cautiously ask the reason of the visit. Then, in a very roundabout way, the father would reply that it concerned their daughter. If the father of the boy was a *piay*, then the girl’s parents would not know what to say, they would be afraid that if they refused, the *piay* would kill them. They would then call the girl and tell her that it was about the boy. The girl could say ‘yes’ or ‘no’. If she said ‘yes’, that would be the beginning of the conditions: could the boy build a house, could he build a boat, could he hunt, could he make a *manari*? If, in answer to one of these questions, the father said that his son would soon learn how to do that, or that the father would build a house for them, this would weaken the offer. Finally, the boy’s father would offer a cigar. If the girl’s father accepted, they would smoke the cigar and the contract would be sealed. If the father did not accept, it would go no further.

By Vincent Aloema

Pottery



In the Lower Marowijne various types of clay are collected by the Kaliña and the Lokono and used for making pottery. Not all types of clay are suitable for pottery. Ordinary clay tends to leak and break, which is why special kinds of clay are used – not the clay found on the beach during low tide.

Samaku at Ayawande (French Guiana)
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Three different kinds of clay are used:

- *Olinjo* is found in the river; it is used to make pottery. It is white, pink or grey but once it is fired, it turns pink.
- *Koeli* is completely red. You find it on the beach when it is dry (during low tide). This is used to color the pottery red.
- *Tawa* (white) is found in the river. This and *koeli* are used for decorating (coloring) the *olinjo* after it has been worked. (K. *olinjo kapepo*)

River clay is characterized by its tough structure, whereas the mud is soft. The bark from the *kwepie* tree is used to make the pottery watertight. *Kwepie* is difficult to find in the area around Bigiston, but there is still some on the French side of the river.

Women sometimes go and collect clay alone, by boat. But men and women do also go and collect clay together. Pottery making is the woman's job. Clay is collected from the river during low tide and is dug out. It is then formed into balls by hand.



***Koeli* and *olinjo* on Bigiston beach**
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

The *kwepie* tree is recognized by its leaves and bark. If in doubt you can even touch the bark with your tongue: "*kwepie* bark has a bitter taste", we were told by two informants from Langamankondre. After collecting the *kwepie* it is taken home in big *moetete* baskets. It is then left in the sun to dry out completely. After this it is burned and crushed in an *ako* (tall stamper) and then sieved in a *manari*: "*It must be as fine as powder*".

Powdered clay (*olinjo*), *kwepie* powder and water are mixed together in a big tub until the right volume has been achieved. The dark color is also created at this time. From this dark mass come the different pottery products.

One item of pottery frequently made is the *sabera*, a bowl for drinking *kasiri* and the *palapi* (a kind of tub). In the past many *samaku* were also made – large earthenware jugs for storing *kasiri* (see picture on previous page).

A *takua*, a small smooth stone, is used for putting a shine on an object. A *takua* cannot be found just anywhere. But if you have no stone to use as a *takua*, you can also use a stone from the maripa fruit.



**Making pottery is typically a woman's job
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Once a clay object is finished, it is not baked immediately but is covered with a piece of cloth so that the wind does not dry it too quickly. But before being baked it must be completely dry, so it is dried in the sun. Then it is fired. This is done using dry wood: “*This is what we do traditionally; we have no oven*”, a female informant from Langamankondre told us. *Sara-sara* is the wood that has always been used. This is a tree that grows very straight, is hollow inside and has leaves that are as big as or bigger than papaya leaves. These trees are found all over the forest.

When the items are ready to be fired, everything is put in place and dry *sara-sara* wood is stacked around the clay objects. This is then bound with an iron hoop or a piece of string or liana (*sjimo*), so that the wood does not fall over. Then the fire is lit beneath and around the outside of the wood. Before baking a prayer is said to God (Tamusi) to ask that everything goes well.

Once the object, for example the *sabera*, has been fired, it is inscribed/painted. *Koeli* is used to give it a red color. “*You put red clay in water to soften it and then rub it onto the object. It is like a sort of red paint,*” explained a woman handicraft worker from Pierrekondre.

Other materials can also be used to color the pottery:

If you want to color your souvenir, then you have a special kind of tree named koemete. You make notches in the tree and collect the juice. You use the smoke from an oil lamp (koko lampoe), which you collect on a piece of cloth by covering the flame a little. You mix the two and then you get a kind of black paint. With this paint you draw on your souvenir. You can also get white colors by working with another kind of clay called tawa (Sr. pimba) but you use this one before firing your product, whereas the black coloring can only be applied to your product after firing.

The products are painted (K. *anjabo*) with images derived from nature, such as:

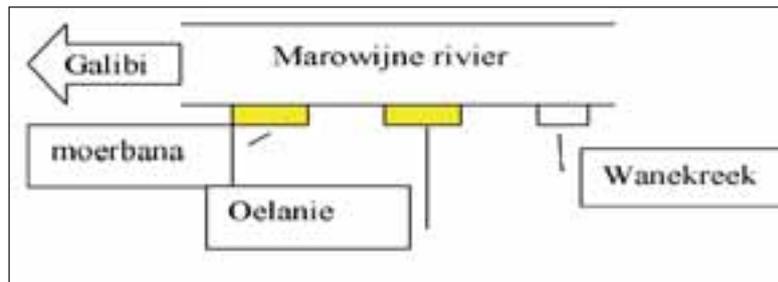
- *matoenipota mere*: the trail of a small black snail (*matoeni*) in the mud
- *akoewamai mere*: a kind of bird shape, from a drawing on the feathers
- *pomipolire*: the branch of the pepper plant
- *okojoemojepo*: skeleton of the water spirit
- *koesalijepo*: skeleton of the deer
- *alamire mere*: skeleton of a snake
- *koesa erepire*: white underside of a crab
- *parana eperere*: foam from seawater
- *piritjara*: shape of a small frog
- *wanopegapo*: honeycomb

The pottery is for selling, but is also made for personal use. A woman handicraft worker from Pierrekondre told us: “Most of the time I make it for commercial use, on order, and I also work with a shop in Albina that buys the products wholesale”.

Before going into the water and starting to dig out the clay, the women ask the good spirits to chase away the evil ones, and they tell the spirits they will be taking the clay.

During menstruation women are not allowed to get clay; this is strictly forbidden.

In Galibi it is possible to get clay during the rainy season, from May through July. After this the water becomes brackish. Clay cannot be collected if the water is salt. In Bigiston clay is collected as it is needed, as long as the water is low. This is possible the whole year through.



Places where clay can be found near Galibi
(Illustration by S. Oeloekanamoe)



Kwepie
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Clay occurs at different points throughout the length of the river in the Lower Marowijne. In the old days they would take clay (*olinjo*) from **Oelani** in particular. Other places where clay can be had are in the vicinity of St. Jean and Portal and at Paddock (French Guiana). At Paddock clay is found at the estuary of **Pagarawari** Creek (near where the French ship sank). At Bigiston clay can simply be taken from the beach.

Kwepie can also be obtained at **Oelanie**. It can, in fact, be found throughout the Galibi area, as well as in the forests of French Guiana. In the past the indigenous people would also sail up the **Oeloesjie** Creek to get *kwepie*.



One female informant from Pierrekondre goes to a place where there used to be a small Maroon village called **Bilokondre**. This was between Marijkedorp and Pierrekondre, on the southern border of Pierrekondre. She collects the grayish clay (*olinjo*) on the waterfront. The red clay (*koeli*) is obtained on the other side of the river, in French Guiana.

According to the female informants from Langamankondre who make a great deal of pottery, anyone from Galibi can come and get clay at Oelanie. That does not apply, however, to all the areas along the river: “*you cannot just go to the French side to get clay. You need permission to do so. The same applies to the other villages*”.

Saberas are only made for personal use
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Box 7.2 The test of the stinging ants

The stinging ants test is traditional among the indigenous people. When a young girl becomes “a woman” (when she first menstruates) an attic is made in the hut. This now grown-up girl is then placed in the attic. She stays there until her period is over.

During this time she will have to weave cotton. She may also get cotton to weave from different family members. Her diet too is changed; she is not allowed to eat everything. For example, no game, rice, banana, sugarcane, papaya, mango, etc. She may not eat in excess; she is only allowed a small plate and a small calabash for drinking from. Within her diet she is permitted to eat small types of poultry, small swamp fish and crab from the creek. When going to the bathroom her head must be covered. She may not go outside at night.

When her period is over, they make *kasiri*. Meanwhile the men collect *juku* (ants). They also weave bracelets and knee bands from palm leaves. They place the ants between the seams. The bands are to be tied to one arm and one knee. The hands are to be put into a *prapi* with the ants.

When the girl is brought out of the attic she is bathed. Her hair (pony tail) is cut and she is dressed in festive clothing. There is a ceremony in which she has to throw and catch burning fluffy unwoven cotton bolls. Then she is brought to the *prapi* for the ants test. She is not allowed to scream or make any sound. If she is a naughty child she will be stung extra, for longer. In some cases she is also tied in a hammock and the ants can sting her in this way. The people involved in the ceremony can also be stung if they wish. The boys can also take part in the test.

After the ceremony has finished they dance to the sambura. For now, the girl may not go to the river. Her lifestyle will change; it is assumed that she will become a stout, firm and diligent woman.

There is a risk that the ants test will disappear because the indigenous people are becoming modern and are influenced by western culture. Religion also has a negative impact on this.

by Georgette Kumanajare

Hammocks

Traditionally, the indigenous women make their hammocks themselves according to a technique passed down from generation to generation. The traditional hammock is made of cotton (K. *maloe*).

The cotton is grown in the agricultural plots. Planting takes place in the dry season and is only harvested one year later, during the following long dry season. The women have very specific knowledge about the planting of good cotton. “*Cotton planting must be done in the long dry season during full moon or during moonlight and when the sky is entirely blue. That is how you get beautiful white cotton during the harvest. If you plant during dark nights, when you harvest you get ugly cotton,*” explained a woman from Langamankondre who is a very experienced hammock-maker. This type of bad harvest is called *india bopa* (K.). A good harvest is called *tindabole* (K.).



Cotton in various stages of processing:
a ball of cotton thread
(koenulimja),
the cotton with seeds that have not yet dried and
a koetja with which the cotton is spun
 (Photo: C. de Jong)

When the cotton is ready to be harvested, the boll bursts open and becomes detached from the plant. Then it can be picked. The cotton is removed from the boll and dried in the sun for about a month. Then it is cleaned; all the dirt is removed and then the seeds. These seeds are used for the next planting. After the seeds have been removed, the pieces of cotton are piled up and spread out by hand. After this, they are beaten with a *koebasjie* (the \pm 1-meter-long trunk of a Mauritius palm, which has been halved and is very dry). Once the cotton has been beaten flat, a very long strip is taken from it. This is wrapped around the wrist and spun. The women use a *koetja* for spinning. A *koetja* is \pm 30 cm long, has the thickness of a pencil and is made from letterwood (K. *paira*). A round plate made of dry calabash is placed under the *koetja*. A hole the size of the *koetja* is then made in the middle of the plate. This is how the string is made from which the hammock will be woven. The string is collected in balls called *koenulima*. For a reasonably big hammock about four balls are needed.

Weaving a hammock

Once the cotton has been spun, the hammock can be started. In Kaliña a hammock is called *maloe epijjo* (*maloe* = cotton and *epeire* = to spin). A hammock is woven as follows: “*You place two sticks in the ground and one across the top so that you have the length and it cannot move. Then you run the balls of string around the poles and start weaving, from bottom to top*”. There are two designs of weaving. There is *pelewa* (arrow shape) and *pakira eposaitjele* (shape of the nail of a *pakira* - peccary). Both are “rotating forms”. Some indigenous women first weave two rows in *pelewa* and at the end another two rows in arrow shape and *pakira eposaitjele* in between. This is done to strengthen the hammock.

The weaver decides how big the hammock will be. There are hammocks for one person and hammocks for two and the length can vary from \pm 1.75 meters to 2 meters. It also depends on the number of balls of cotton and the number of *koetja* that a woman has at her disposal.

Weaving a hammock takes from two to four weeks if the person works continuously. The average life of a hammock is 15 to 20 years.



Hammock weavers
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Nowadays, fewer cotton hammocks are made than in the past. In the first place, they involve a lot of work and a lot of cotton has to be collected; in the second place not many people plant cotton any more, in the third place it takes a lot of time. Now they prefer to use foreign types of string such as nylon or a cotton string used on the shrimp trawlers. The majority of hammocks nowadays are for selling.

Decorative beadwork

A variety of seeds and fruits of trees and plants are collected from the forest and used to make decorative beadwork such as necklaces, bracelets, pendants and earrings. The necklaces have various forms and colors. There are decorative items for both men and women. Those for men are mostly necklets and wristbands. This beadwork was and still is worn by the indigenous people themselves, but the greater part is intended for sale (souvenirs).

In Galibi, which is where most tourists come to visit, there is a center for an indigenous women's organization named "Worian Uwoonaka" Galibi (Progressive Indigenous Women). The women collect materials from the forest with which they make their beadwork. These items are then brought to the women's center and sold. Part of the proceeds from the items sold goes to the village and part to the women themselves. More and more women in Galibi are joining the group, which means that greater numbers of them now make handicrafts.



Village assistant, Mrs. Sjinga
from Christiaankondre,
in traditional costume and beadwork
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Seeds and stones are used, including:

- *Anakogo* or *panakogo* – a black/reddish tree seed (see photo);
- *Kurume-enuru dano* – a round seed from a kind of liana which occurs in the coastal areas. There are three kinds: one is entirely red, one entirely black and the third has brown/black spots;
- *Panarako* – a greyish round forest fruit found along the coast;
- *Kumatara* – the fruit of a tree-like plant which mostly occurs on Utapo beach;
- *Tawasji* – a long, grass-like seed which is not found in Galibi;
- *Sjigisjigi* – this looks like a liana. There are two types which can be found near Bigiston and the surrounding area;
- *Pararapoe* – a greyish round forest fruit that occurs along the coast;
- *Kokriki* – small red/black seeds;
- *Maripa* – red stones;
- *Ayawa* – sharp, brown fruit stones; very plentiful near **Ayawande** (French Guiana);
- *Peleka epere* – a light brown fruit, just like *swit bomki*; when ripe it opens to reveal a white layer around the stone; the stone is polished using sand;
- *Mara mara* – brown, like wood. Occurs mainly in the south of Suriname, but can also be found in Bigiston. This is usually painted.



Anakogo or *panakogo* seeds
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

In addition to seeds and stones from forest fruits, other materials are also used for souvenirs and ornamental beadwork. For example, animal teeth, such as the teeth of the peccary (pakira and pingo), jaguar (mainly the eyeteeth) monkeys and rabbits. In addition, oyster and other shells that are found on the sandbanks are used, as well as parrot and raven feathers. These are used for headdresses (in the past these would only be worn by indigenous paramount chiefs) and other ornaments. The downy feathers of the king vulture (anuwana) are used during mourning rituals (*omankano* and *epokodono*, see Boxes 5.1 and 8.1).



Necklaces are made for personal use
and for sale
(Photo: C. de Jong)

New seeds and stones are looked for and collected when the stock is finished, perhaps two or three times a year. Both men and women collect materials for beadwork and decorations, but the woman is the one who uses them. Only while menstruating is a woman forbidden to go into the forest. In the rainy season it is difficult to find seeds because they do not open at that time. In the dry season they do open, so that is the best time to collect seeds.

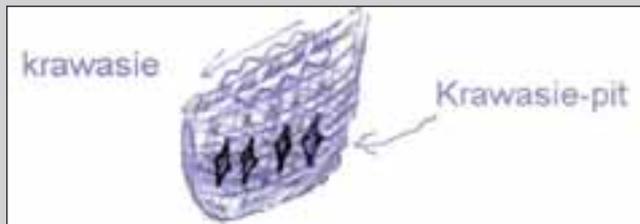
Table 7.3 Collecting of materials for beadwork (Galibi)

Season	Long dry season	Long rainy season	Short dry season	Short rainy season
Forest seeds	xxxx	x	x	x

Many kinds of materials are to be found in the forest (behind Galibi) as well as along the shore and the coast. These are collected locally by the person who uses them. The ladies at the women's centre maintain that there are enough seeds and fruit stones to be found everywhere, especially around **Oeloesjie** and **Utapo** (in the vicinity of Baboensantie) and the surrounding area. However, fewer are to be found across the river (French Guiana). Different varieties of seeds can be found in the different localities depending, for example, on the kind of soil in the area. The *tawasji*, for example, does not occur in Galibi because the soil is unsuitable. It is found in the wetlands and can also be cultivated. It is mainly collected in town, where it grows extensively. Nor can the *sjigi-sjigi* be found in Galibi, but it does occur in the south, towards Bigiston.

Box 7.3 *Karawasi*

The name “*karawasi*” refers both to the Kaliña circle dance and to the musical instrument (rattle) used during the dance. *Karawasi* is also the name of the plant that produces the seeds with which the rattle is filled, and is grown both by the indigenous people and the Maroons. With the Maroons the stringed seeds are worn around the ankle to make a rattling sound when they dance.



(Drawing by Michel Barend)

To make a *karawasi* rattle you need ripe seeds that have been scooped out of the fruit. About 25-30 seeds are needed for one instrument. These are then enclosed in a bag woven from warimbo. For the *karawasi* dance about ten bags are needed. Some women also bring their own *karawasi*.

The *karawasi* dance is only performed when someone of indigenous descent passes away: on the evening after the death, on the night of the funeral and eight days following the funeral. No *sambura* (drum) is played. On the eighth day following the passing away, a church service is held followed by a speech given by the village leader or the village assistant and possibly also a member of the family. After this the dance with the *karawasi* takes place. The circle dance is also danced with the *Omakano* and the *Epekodono*, to the *sambura* (also see Boxes 5.1 and 8.1). When a *piay* passes away the *aremi* is danced, but to the maraka not the *karawasi*. The maraka is a hollowed-out calabash, filled with seeds and to which a holder is attached. It is used by *piays* for their *piay* activities. The other *piays* come to sing with their maraka and the *aremi* is danced.

Before the start a woman is asked by the mother of the deceased or another family member to open the dance. She stands up and starts with her song which will have an emotional content and often be accompanied by crying. The songs provide a biography of the deceased, stirring the emotions of the surviving relatives. After this, the woman is accompanied by men and women who sing along and dance. They form a circle and dance on the spot on which they are standing. Thereafter they dance in a ring. They hold each other by the shoulder for physical and emotional support. The men heighten the mood by stamping with their footwear. The surviving relatives are obliged to dance the *karawasi* in honor of the deceased family member. It often happens that family members are criticized during the singing if they are seen not to be dancing.

There are variations to the circle dance in which birds (the red Ibis, *wala*) and butterflies (*parambara*) are imitated. A popular version is the *aremi*. In order to dance to the rhythm the dance has to be learned in advance. With the *aremi* they hold each other, but not by the shoulder.

Sometimes it happens that in a family the mother can sing. Once she has grown old and cannot or does not want to sing, a daughter or granddaughter can take over. Daughters and granddaughters have the right to sing the songs of their elders. If there are many of them present on such an occasion they coordinate who will sing so that the song is not sung twice. In this way the singing can be passed on from mother to daughter. Some women go to someone who is willing to teach them the songs. A woman who is busy singing during a cultural evening is, at that moment, the leader. When she gets tired she is replaced. That person then becomes the leader and so on.

Nowadays there are indigenous groups who are taking on the songs but they sing them without the genuine story. Others convert the songs to western music and that is very awkward, especially for the elders who have difficulty accepting this.

By Georgette Kumanajare

Chapter 8 Use of wood

The Kaliña and the Lokono make use of a variety of species of wood that grow in the forest. Wood is mainly used as firewood for cooking and as a construction material for boats, houses and shelters. Some individuals also use it for wood-carving. Wood is used both for personal needs and for sale, depending on the purpose. Table 8.1 gives an overview of the different kinds of wood and their designated use. Boats are made for personal use and for sale. Firewood or wood for house building is for personal use. The majority of wood carvings and furniture is sold.



Wood is used, among other things, to build seaworthy *piakas*, such as here in Galibi
(Photo: C. de Jong)

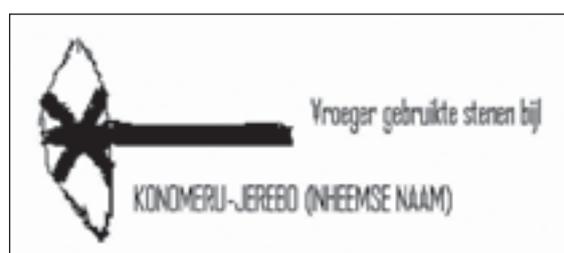
Table 8.1 Wood-cutting seasons (Galibi)

Activity	Short dry season	Short rainy season	Long dry season	Long rainy season
Firewood	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
House materials	xxx	xx	xxxx	x
Boat construction	x	x	xxxx	x

Most wood is cut in the dry season, between July and November, because the forest is then dry and safe. “[In the rainy season] it is, in fact, not safe to work in the forest. It is too slippery to use an axe”, explained two experienced boat builders from Christiaankondre. A boat builder from Erowarte explained: “In the rainy season you do something else, but you do not build boats. Anyway, you have to let the boat dryout well”. The building of houses, too, is more often done in the dry season. Firewood is cut throughout the year because it is used almost daily. For woodcarving too there is no special season; it is done throughout the year.

Before cutting down a tree, the space where the tree will fall is cleared and a “bed” made from round pieces of wood laid in a line, on which the tree will fall. Then they start cutting the tree down. This is done with an axe (K. *wewe* or *woe woe*) on the side on which the tree is to fall. Very long ago a stone axe (K. *konomeru-jerebo*) would have been used: “This came from a firestone. It was tied to a handle made of brownheart wood (K. *arowone*), a hardwood species, and attached with a string woven from forest material”

(boat builder from Bigiston). Before using the axe they would fast for three to four days. Nowadays axes are rarely used because chainsaws are used instead (Stihl). This is a lot quicker. A machete is also still used. Woodcutting is sometimes done in groups and sometimes alone. The traditional collective labor (K. *moshiro* L. *majoeri*; see Box 4.1) is regularly used, for example, to cut building material for a house.



Stone axe
(Illustration by G. Watamaleo)

Although wood cutting is mainly done by men, women do take part. Their main activity is cutting and collecting firewood, but they also help the men with cutting house materials. Women always collect firewood with other women.

Table 8.2 Wood species and their use

Surinamese name	Kaliña name	Lokono name	Used for
Wane (black and red wane)	wonoe	tete loema	Boats, boat materials, furniture, house-building; the best kind of wood because it has a long lifespan (good quality, soft wood)
Loksie	kijerew		Boats, boat materials; is hard and firm and also good quality
Tonka (tonquin)	ereyulu		Boats
Basra locus	kjere-ow	bara kaloebali	Boats, furniture, house building; a strong species of wood with a long lifespan
Grofu olo or	ierakobi		Boats, housebuilding
Kasiri udu	wewe; casilie-wewe		boats
Sopo udu (puni)	aluku malie		boats
Pakoelie	pakoeli		Hulls of boats, furniture; the fruit is also eaten
Wanekwarie	kware		Hulls of boats, furniture; is a species of wane
Krapa (crab wood)	krapa		Furniture, boat material (hulls)
Bruinhart (brown heart)	alawone		House materials, axe handles, electricity poles
Pisi	ajewe or ajewoe		Boats, boat materials (hulls), furniture
Ceder (cedar)	samali japo	koejali	Boats, woodcarving; particularly used by Maroons
Parie wood	apoekoetja		Boat paddles, posts of houses and also for souvenirs
Black or red kabbes/mira oedoe	wosji-wosji		Boats
Kaw oedoe	pagasa		Boats
Foengoedoe or foengoe (sago palm)	kubesjine		Firewood; good for baking as it lights quickly, does not go out easily and makes very little smoke
	tapiriri		Firewood for drying fish
	tonolo-bipo		Firewood for drying fish, also for baking cassava and bread
Soemaroeba	sjimaroeba		Handicrafts, souvenirs
	poripo		Firewood
Purperhart (purple heart) wood	oelapa		Handles for axes and hammers. Also used as a stamper as well as for making furniture
Letter wood	paira	bele koro	For making bows
Kopie wood	coebi-ie	kaboekali	Boats and house materials (house building)
Walaba	parewe		Posts for kamps and houses and for roofing as well as electricity poles
Mapa (merki oedoe)	amapa		Woodcarving; soft and easy to handle; fruit are also edible
Soema-roeba			Wood-carving; soft and easy to handle
Ingi pipa	oelemalie		Bark is used for rolling tobacco (k. <i>talban</i>) for the <i>piay</i> (cigarette paper)
	sjimili		Very hard, firm wood

Surinamese name	Kaliña name	Lokono name	Used for
Bolletrie (bullet wood, balata)	palata		Rubber extraction; fruit is also edible
Alata oedoe	alata wete		House materials
Mirrie wood	mirrie		House building; can be found everywhere
Baboen wood (wild nutmet, wild cedar)	waloesji		For making plywood (particularly for house building)
Bebespoor wood (Bloodwood)	moetoesji		Can be found in Galibi, softwood
Parwa wood (black mangrove)	koenapo	boeraba	Firewood
Kankantrie (cotton silk)	koemaka		For plywood
Possentrie (possum wood)			For plywood

Customs and rituals relating to wood-cutting

Before going into the forest to cut down a tree, various rituals can be carried out. The practice of one boat builder from Galibi is as follows: *“First praying to Tamusi (God) and also fasting, maybe two days long so that everything will go well and also that it will be completed quickly”*. Some woodcutters say that they first talk to the forest, the trees and mother earth before starting work. Sometimes they first strike the tree trunk with an axe before they talk to the tree. Another custom is to sprinkle *kasiri*, sugar water or just water or beer on the ground.

House building

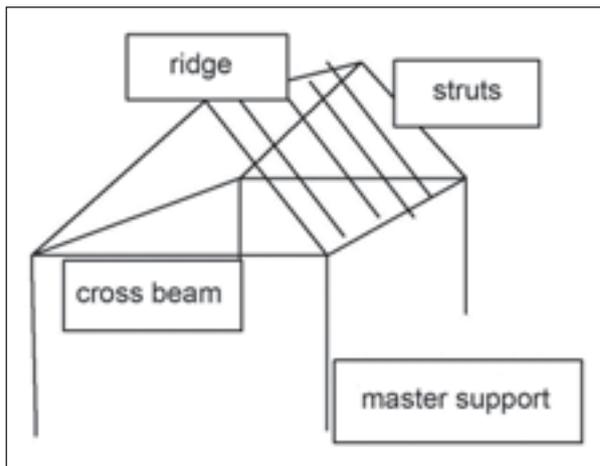
In the past when building houses the Kaliña and the Lokono would use the different materials and wood species to be found in the forest. Nowadays many people prefer working with non-traditional materials such as bricks, cement and zinc sheets for the roofing. The traditional and modern methods of building each have their advantages and disadvantages. The traditional shelters look beautiful for the tourists and are cool, as the wind can blow through them. The plant and wood materials, however, have a short lifespan and have to be replaced sooner than, for example, stone. Extensive house-building can create scarcity of certain wood and palm species. A stone house is more expensive but has a longer lifespan and reduces pressure on natural resources. You also often see a stone or wooden house and next to it a traditional shelter where the owner grows cassava.



**Building a new shelter (Erowarte)
(Photo: C. de Jong)**

When someone wants to build a house, he first has to ask permission of God (L. *Adajali*; K. *Tamoesji*). He asks if he may build and that He will see that everything goes well. First he has to clean the site:

You speak to the ancestors that have lived there for thousands of years and ask for everything to go well: good harvests, no quarrels, etc., after which you place the calabash on the ground. Only then may you start building.



Construction of a traditional shelter
(Illustration by C. de Jong)

The traditional house of the indigenous people is a shelter; an open construction on four uprights with a pointed roof made of leaves. The master supports (K. *wakapoe*) are the four uprights at each corner. These are made from walaba wood (K. *parewe*). Then there are the cross beams (K. *soelapang*) which are made of ingi oedoe (K. *omosé*). The roofing is placed on the struts (K. *ijarare*), made of *omosé*. These wood species have a long lifespan and insects do not attack them. The ridge (K. *iretere*), is the topmost horizontal beam and is also made of *omosé*.

The roofing is mainly made from pina fronds (from the podosiri palm, K. *wasai jare*) or kumbu. This is done in one of two

ways: a) by braiding; when the fronds are folded lengthwise and braided together; or b) woven; this method can only be used with the pina fronds, not with kumbu. The frond is slit down the middle, folded over and fastened.

It takes about two weeks to collect the material for the vertical supports. Collecting the pina fronds takes three or four days. This is the case if the builder works alone. However, if working in the *majoeri* system, it is much quicker (see Box 4.1). Particularly when constructing a large shelter, work is almost always done in a group. To finish a six-meter shelter, working alone would require about a month; with the *majoeri* system it takes about two weeks.



Roofing from woven pina fronds
(Photo: C. de Jong)

The fastened or woven pina fronds are tied to the struts one by one. To do this you need *kamina* (K. *sjimo*), a forest liana used as a rope, as well as *akekewa* (K.). *Kamina* can be found in the area around Erowarte. For *akekewa* one has to go to French Guiana. The woven leaves are attached vertically whereas the cut and bound leaves are fastened horizontally. Before nails were available, the entire structure would have been secured with *akekewa*.

A shelter roofed with pina fronds can last four to six years. Once it has been completed, a fire is lit inside the shelter so the smoke can dry and strengthen the pina fronds and repel insects.

Other leaves can also be used for roofing, such as tasi and truli, palulu and maripa. Tasi and truli are rarely found in the Lower Marowijne area, however, palulu and maripa are readily found, especially near Galibi. When using palulu leaves, the roof is first constructed on the ground and is then placed in its entirety on the shelter.

A shelter can be (partially) enclosed For this, the trunk of the pina palm (*prasara*) is used. Depending on the thickness, the trunk is sliced into two or four planks. These are then nailed together.



Roofing made from palulu leaves
(Photo: C. de Jong)

The “walls” of the shelter can also be woven. This is called *gollet*. For this, fungu udu (*K. coebesjine*) and ingi udu (*omosé*) are used and interwoven.



House with *gollet* walls in Bigiston (left)
and Alfonsdorp (right)
(Photos: C. de Jong)

Boat building

The first stage of building a boat (*K. piaka*) takes place in the forest, usually by the boat builder alone but sometimes with the help of others. After felling the tree the upper part is cut and one section is made the length of the boat. This is then hollowed out, first with an axe and then with a *purusai* (a kind of chisel). The *pururé* is then used. This is to smooth (straighten) the inside of the boat. Thereafter the boat is turned over and planed with a *tunupere* (plane). Finally the bow is formed and the thickness of the boat measured with a hand drill. This work in the forest takes on average three weeks.

Thereafter the shaped boat is dragged home to be worked on further. This is done with the help of the *moshiro* (*majoeri*) system with ten to fifteen villagers. A boat builder from Erowarte explains: “Once the tree has been cut down, I come back to my village, look for a few men – because you need people to help you – and then we go back to drag the boat to the waterfront”. Small cylindrical pieces of wood are laid on the ground as rollers and a tow-rope is fastened to the tree trunk. This heavy piece of wood can thus be pulled to the waterfront. It is then transported via the river, and at its destination is pulled up out of the water again.



Captain Pané (Christiaankondre) puts the finishing touches to his boat
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

After the hollowing out and planing, firewood such as *poripo* and *kubesjine* is sourced so that the boat can be expanded by fire. “By heating the boat, it becomes softer and then you can stretch it. The bigger the tree the bigger the boat will become” explains a boat builder from Erowarte. This burning always takes place early in the morning (at about 5 o'clock) and often a few others help out.

After this, the *paja*'s are put on. A *paja* is a side piece fastened on each side of the dug-out trunk to heighten the boat. These are sometimes bought, but they can also be made from *sjimaroeba*, *pisi* and *krapa* wood. After fitting, *paja* (tar) is placed on both sides and on any cracks. This is covered with cotton and thereafter with a zinc sheet. A transom made of *basra locus* or *pereka* is then fitted to the back of the boat (to which an engine can be fastened) (K. *koeriala aseboete*). A side support, a *kiendie*, is also fitted.



Once the boat is finished, it is put in the water
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Firewood



There are particular trees used for firewood, i.e. those that burn for a long time, for example *foegoe*, *kwakoe* wood or *poripo*. Others are *parwa* wood and *swit-bonki*. Sometimes a tree is cut down. The bark is then removed, the tree dries out and the leaves fall off. But wood is also collected on the ground. Fruit trees are (in principle) not cut as firewood. Nowadays, less wood is used because people have gas to cook with. It is only for baking cassava, for example, that wood is used because of the taste and because it would otherwise consume a lot of gas and simply would not work.

Box 8.1 *Epekodono*

Just as with the *Omakano* (see box 5.1) it takes a lot of hard work to organize this festival. Preparation can take two to three years or sometimes even longer. An enormous quantity of kasiri is made – about 10 to 12 barrels, and sometimes more. “*This is tradition, a festival with four or five barrels would not be considered an Epekodono, you would be laughed at*”. The following preparations need to be made:

- Making different costumes for the family members.
- Collecting beads and other ornaments.
- Weaving a number of *matapi*'s (squeezer), *manari*'s (sieve) and *woriwori*'s (fans) for preparing the cassava.
- Preparing a new agricultural plot so there will be enough cassava for making kasiri, with enough black potato.
- Collecting firewood, as well as iron plates for baking the cassava.
- Creating a new big shelter where the festivities will take place.
- Obtaining hollowed-out wood and animal hides to make the *sambura*.
- *Karawasi*'s have to be renewed or supplemented.
- A 'bench' must be made in the image of a cayman (see pictures). The day before the event the cayman is painted and decorated.
- The giant **Anuwana** must be hunted, for their downy feathers used by the women for putting on their cut ponytails.
- Collecting *taboeloepo* (black liquid for body painting), *alakoiserie* (for the face) and *koesoewe* (for coloring the hair red and glueing on the downy feathers).



An old and a new *moelé* (bench)
(Photos: C. de Jong)

When the kasiri is to be prepared a woman will be approached to coordinate the activities. She, in turn, will approach others to help her. The afternoon before the festival, people in mourning will be painted on their chest, arms and back with the black liquid. On the night of the party, as with the *Omakano*, mourners are not permitted to dance to the *sambura*, but only with the *karawasi*. The next morning, the remains of the possessions are burnt and the same acts performed up to taking a seat on the cayman. The hair is cut by someone who has previously been approached to do so on this day. After the cutting of the hair the mourners are made ready and dressed for the party. Drinks are placed on the ground next to them. These drinks are divided by the mourners and the helpers of the people coming out of mourning. When they are ready, the *sambura* is played and there is a special song. The men stand behind the *sambura* and the people coming out of mourning are guided by others to the *sambura*. The *karawasi* is no longer used.

This festival can last days – sometimes even a week. It is the ending of the period of mourning. This the official farewell (for good) to the deceased. This event is intended to put the deceased to rest and to ensure that the deceased will not become angry with the family; it is also to protect the family. “*This is a Kaliña tradition but there is the risk that it will not survive. For the most part this is due to the influence of the various evangelical congregations, which forbid the indigenous people to exercise their own culture. On the other hand, it is an expensive event. Indigenous people are generally not in employment and even if they are, they do not earn enough. The wages that the average civil servant earns is not even 200 Euros per month and how can you get by on this kind of money, when it is not even sufficient to live on? That is why you have to hustle on the side, to get enough money*”.

By: Georgette Kumanajare

Wood carving

Wood is also used for carvings, such as for the *moelé*. A *moelé* is a traditional bench used by the Kaliña during the end-of-mourning festival (*Epekodono*) in which the family of the deceased sit on the bench. The *moelé* is also traditionally used when inaugurating a captain. These *moelé*'s are nowadays also sold as souvenirs and used as normal benches. There are different kinds: 1) *akalé-moelé*; 2) *katusie-moelé* (bench in the shape of a jaguar); and 3) *anuwane-moelé* (bench in the shape of the king vulture). The wood used is strong but soft, such as cedar wood. A wood carving, such as a bench, takes about a week.

For wood carving, first of all, a block is cut from a tree trunk. The underside is worked using a *pururé* (a kind of bent chisel). This is followed by the fine work, for which the *purusai*, *pururé*, and *tunupere* (plane) are used. Finally it is filed with a *kele-kele* (file).

In the past, only materials from the forest were used for painting the wood carvings, for example, the fruit of the *tabulupo* tree. This was peeled and grated in a bowl (calabash) and from this came a blackish substance which was mixed with the blackish coloring from the cassava cooking pan (*alinadu*). Nowadays a marker pen is mainly used.



The trunk of the Mauritius palm is also used to make other furniture such as playpens for babies
(Photo: C. de Jong)

Wood-cutting areas

The same wood species are not to be found everywhere. This is not necessarily due to excessive use: certain species are seldom, or never, found in some places because the soil is unsuitable.

The people from Galibi get their wood from the forest that lies five to six kilometers behind the village. It has valuable wood species such as: *tonka* (tonquin bean), *ingi pipa*, brownheart, *foengoedoe* and *paguli*. Wood species for boats, such as *zoals loksie* (stinking tree) can also be found at Ulani (Kapasi). *Sjimili* wood is readily to be found in the area around Babunsanti- Malipa. For species such as wane and *loksie*, people from Galibi go to the tributaries of the Marowijne River on the French side, such as to Maracam Creek and Kuduwaw Creek (see drawing).

Boat builders from Bigiston get their wood from the immediate area, especially on the southern edge of the village or along the French shore. In the forests of Prosperité, French Guiana, *pereka* is widely found. One boat builder from Erowarte often gets his wood from Atapiririe, a deserted indigenous village about 10 minutes by boat north of Erowarte. People from Marijkedorp cut wood in the Marijkedorp forest and in Wane Creek.

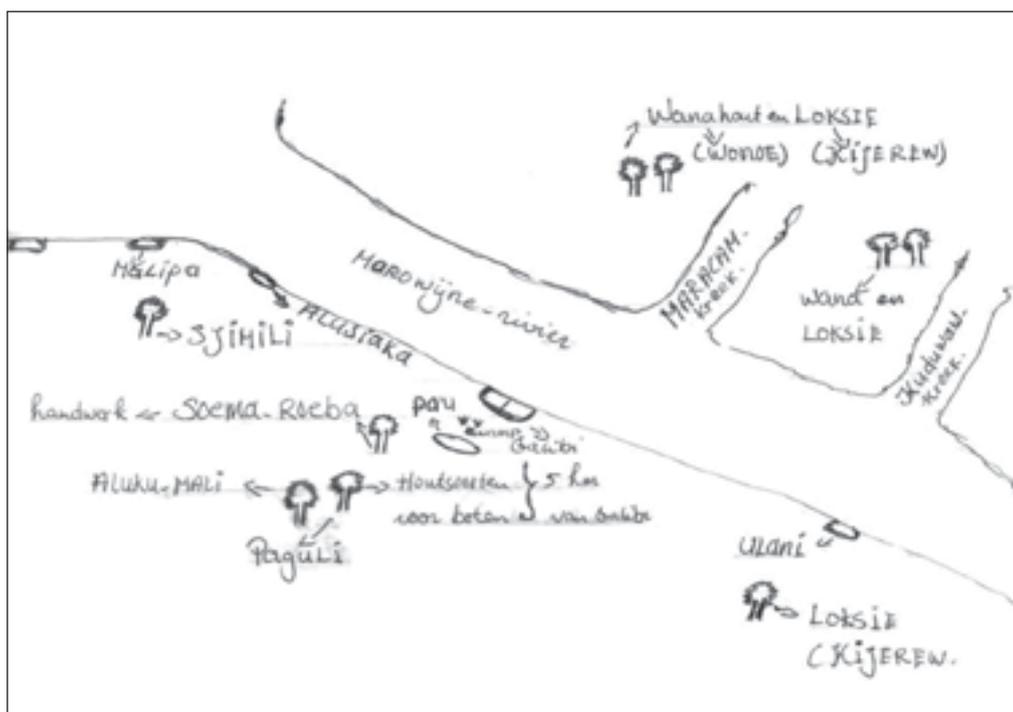
Wood supply

According to one Marijkedorp resident, there are enough different wood species in the forests of the Lower Marowijne along the Surinamese shore. The only exception is wane wood. The reason for this is that it has been (over) used by the many logging companies and individuals, including the indigenous people themselves. "Wane is a very popular kind of wood and the preferred wood of indigenous people for building boats. It floats well and so does not sink", says an informant from Marijkedorp. There are young wane trees, but these are not suitable yet for cutting down. In the vicinity of Erowarte, not only wane, but also *pisi* wood has become scarce. Both species can now only be found deep in the forest.

Certain other wood species are increasingly rare or no longer to be found at all. In general, there are no valuable wood species close to the village, but deeper into the forest they can still be found.

According to an informant from Marijkedorp, letterwood, purple heart and *groenhart* (yellow poui) are barely found behind Marijkedorp. In general, kumbu palm (*K. kumu*) can be found further from the village. There is a new rule, therefore, that kumbu palm may no longer be cut down because the people want to be able to continue using its fruits (also see Chapter 7).

In certain places, such as on the other side of the river, (French Guiana) not only is there less wane but also less of species such as *loksi* (*K. kijerew*) and *samalijapo* because these are widely used for house building. “It’s namely in concession areas that have been exhausted that you don’t really find valuable species of wood any more. Also in places where there are a lot of agricultural plots, you find few species that can be used,” one informant from Marijkedorp remarked.



Places in the Galibi area where wood can be found
(Illustration by S. Majarawai)

The types of wood that are much used for firewood, such as *fungu udu* (sago palm) (*L. kubesjine*), are decreasing in number. Similarly, *tonolo bipo* is less easy to find because it is used a great deal for drying fish.

Ownership and management of wood-cutting areas

Although under Surinamese law the forests belong to the State, it is considered that the trees originally belonged to the indigenous people in the area. In any event, “the trees belong to mother earth”, one informant said, “but the indigenous people may use the trees as they have done for all time”. The trees are the collective property of the indigenous people because they are in a collectively managed area, more specifically, the forest. But as soon as a tree has been cut down, it becomes the personal property of the person who felled it either for his own use or to make something from it. When people do not comply with this agreement, conflicts may arise. As an informant from Christiaan&ondre explained: “Sometimes a woman has her husband cut down a whole tree so that she has a stock of firewood. If another woman finds this tree trunk she may not use it without the owner’s knowledge”.

In principle, wood – and any particular species if available – is obtained from the forest behind the village where one lives. This is mainly because of the distances between villages people prefer to remain closer to home if possible. Nevertheless, any indigenous person from one of the eight

Box 8.2 The wood-cutting permit (HKV) and community forests

In 1947 the colonial rulers introduced a law that stipulated that everyone needed to have a license to cut wood in Suriname. It was determined that the license holder had to respect “*the customary rights of Bushnegroes and Indians to their villages, settlements and agricultural plots*” situated within the concession area. At the same time the law also included that for indigenous people and Maroons a special regulation would apply with regard to exploitation of wood. This became the **woodcutting permit** (*houtkapvergunning* – HKV). According to the law this license was issued “*partly on behalf of the members of the family of the license holder and of persons who could be considered as members of his tribe*”. In practice this meant that the HKV was issued in the name of the village leader. The license was granted for five years with the possibility for renewal. Renewal was not granted if the government “*on grounds of the public interest...did not deem such desirable*”. Within the HKV it was also permitted to gather non-timber products. Furthermore it was emphatically laid down that it was not permitted to transfer the HKV to non-Indians or non-Bushnegroes. See: art. 5 paragraph 1 of the Timber Ordinance (GB 1947); art. 9 paragraph 3 and art. 16 of the Timber Resolution (GB 1947, no. 94).

In 1992 the Forest Management Act was adopted. The act laid down that the HKV would be replaced by “**community forest**”. The act gives the following description of community forest: “*forested areas located around community lands and that have been designated as community forest on behalf of inhabitants from the interior who live in villages and settlements and also tribal people, and which have been set aside for their subsistence as well as for possible commercial logging use, collection of non-timber by-products and land-clearing for agriculture*”. (Forest Management Act, art. 1 sub o). Special legislation (a State decree) is, however, necessary to establish community forests. Up to now this legislation has not as yet been laid down. Until then, the HKV will continue to exist.

Both the HKV and the community forests start from the assumption that the forest belongs to the State. The indigenous people and the Maroons get permission for a limited period of time to use the forest for certain reasons, namely logging, gathering non-timber products and agriculture. The government may revoke this permission if they deem such advisable. Furthermore the government (the Minister of Natural Resources) is the one that appoints the areas. The Act does not lay down any form of involvement of the community in determining the boundaries of the areas. In the case of the HKVs you also see that the HKV concession is sometimes kilometers away from the village and the areas in which traditional use take place.

(Source: E.R. Kambel and F. MacKay, *The Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Maroons in Suriname*, IWGIA, Copenhagen, 1999)

villages, who is looking for suitable wood may go anywhere in the Lower Marowijne area to cut wood for their own use as long as they have sought permission from the nearest village administration. Trees within the village, such as mango and other domestic trees, may not be cut down without the owner's permission.

Some villages (Marijkedorp, Alfonsdorp and Bigiston) have a wood-cutting permit (*houtkapvergunning* – HKV) issued by the State and in the name of the village leader. In the case of Bigiston, according to the Captain, it is not clear who currently holds the HKV; it is not in the name of the current village administration. But they do know where the boundary of the HKV is: it runs from the far side of Apatou up to Alumada (Aroemata Creek).

Both Alfonsdorp and Marijkedorp have their HKV in the Wane Creek area, their original settlement. In the case of Marijkedorp, the HKV runs from Atapiriri up to Wane Creek.

August Kappler had already given the people in the Wane Creek area permission to use the wood there to build boats and houses (also see Chapter 1 on the granting of Albina to Kappler). In 1983 this license was put on paper, and was placed in the name of the then Captain Watamaleo from Marijkedorp. At that time only a few people lived in Alfonsdorp and the Captain of Marijkedorp had responsibility for that village. Later on, Alfonsdorp got its own captain at which time the Captain from Marijkedorp divided the HKV in two, giving the northern half to Alfonsdorp. By then the village was already on its current site.



The 1956 map showing the various HKVs. Wane Creek flows between the Alfonsdorp and Marijkedorp HKVs (in orange). The border of the Wane Creek Nature Reserve is shown in green.

Between Marijkedorp, Alfonsdorp and the HKVs of Marijkedorp there are two other HKVs each in the name of a Maroon captain. The first is in the name of Captain Adauwna who was from Neger Creek, near Alfonsdorp. The second is in the name of Captain Tanoë from Bilokondre (between Marijkedorp and Pierrekondre). They entered into agreements with commercial logging operators. Although these places no longer have captains, it is assumed that these agreements are still in effect as logging still continues there. However, the demarcation of the Lower Marowijne area means that these non-indigenous HKVs fall within the original indigenous area, and the hope is that these permits will be revoked.



Parie wood is used to make supports for houses, paddles and also souvenirs
(Photo: K. Neke)

Chapter 9 Sustainable use of nature

The right balance between man and nature

According to the Kaliña and the Lokono everything on earth, as well as things that Westerners consider non-living such as stones, clay and water, are alive and connected to one another. All animal, plant and fish species, as well as stones, creeks and rivers have a spirit that protects them and that we as human beings should take into consideration. See, for example, Box 9.1 about maraka stones (K. *tawono*). Preserving the right balance between man and nature is of prime importance. If this balance is upset, by incorrect or excessive use, there may be adverse consequences such as disease, accidents or misfortune. The shaman, who is called the *piay* among the Kaliña and *semechichi* among the Lokono, plays an important role in maintaining this balance. He (or she) is the person who has contact with the spiritual world and through the medium of his/her guardians or guide spirits (K. *jakoewa*) discovers whether someone has acted wrongly or made a mistake. The shaman then acts as intermediary, with the help of these *jakoewa*, to seek forgiveness for the violation committed.

The rules that should not be violated can be divided into two main categories:

1. Avoid young specimens
2. Use only what you need.

Besides these, there are certain animals or fish that may never be killed or captured; trees that may not be cut down and areas that people may not enter. These rules ensure that the balance between man and nature is not disrupted. In other words, they enable the indigenous communities to make use of the environment that surrounds them in a sustainable manner and for generation after generation.

This chapter describes the two principal rules, drawing on statements by hunters, agriculturalists, fishermen and other informants. Then follows an overview of the species that may not be killed and the areas that are forbidden. Finally, there is a description of how the rules are enforced and passed on to the younger generation.

Box 9.1 Maraka stones

Interview with Albertus Sehoe, *piay* of Langamankondre:

The maraka is made from a calabash (K. *kwaí*). Inside the maraka are small stones (K. *tawono*); these stones are not easily found and only a *piay* can find them. They are mostly found in Yalimapo. They are not easy to see. Before starting to look for the stones the shaman first '*piays*' them. The *akele* (spirit of the stones) shows the *piay* where to find the stones. The maraka stones belong to the *toena gele* (the water spirit). This *toena gele* also becomes your *jakoewa* (guardian spirit). The *akele* of the stones also teaches you to sing songs. He becomes your protector (*ajakodote*). The songs that the *jakoewa* teaches you are called *toenagere walere* (songs of the water spirit).

The maraka may not be lent to anyone else. Only when the owner has passed away, may it be lent or given to another shaman or to the wife of the shaman, if she wants it. The maraka is in a *jamatoe* (case) and no-one but the shaman may go into the case. The case also holds the shaman's cigar (*oelemalie*) and other necessities.

Interview by: S. Oeloeanamoe and S. Majorawai



**Piay Alfons Nasja, from Galibi,
with his maraka
(Photo: Runningman)**

Rule I Avoid young specimens

Hunting and fishing

If a hunter sees that a game animal is running slowly or does not move at all, it may be that the female is pregnant, and we do not shoot it (Christiaankondre)

If accidentally you shoot a pingo with young, you do everything in your power to keep the baby alive. This is both if it is still in the womb or after it has been born. You then take the animal home. This is a way to protect the animals. Because if you shoot the mother, next time there will be fewer young. Mostly the older ones are shot – they are bigger and slower. (Pierrekondre)

We leave the small ones alone and choose the older ones from the group – two or three of them. (Alfonsdorp)

Anyone committing certain acts will be shown that it is wrong, for example pointlessly shooting young game or small birds. (Marijkedorp)

Young game is not shot, but if a female is pregnant this is not obvious, because in the first instance a hunter cannot tell whether a particular animal is pregnant. (Marijkedorp)

Small monkeys are not shot. It is useless. (Marijkedorp)

I always teach my boys that they should not use small meshed nets, I always use two- or three-inch nets, because then you cannot catch small fish. (Erowarte)

If the fish is small and still alive, I throw it back; but if the fish is already dead, I keep it. (Erowarte)

Nowadays koetin is no longer used. Koetin is a fishing technique that was the most frequently used. This was a small net with fine mesh that would be placed in certain fishing grounds along the coast – on mud banks – and at high tide every type of fish would go into the net and couldn't escape at low tide. As a result, fish that people didn't need as well as the small ones would all be dead. (Christiaankondre)

Plants and trees

You may not cut down a tree that is too small; one which is smaller than 40 centimeters [in diameter]. (Marijkedorp)

Also, wood species that have just started to grow may not be cut down. They have to be protected. (Christiaankondre)

To make sure that warimbo does not get used up, the warimbo stalks are cut a bit above the ground. Some cut it two to three centimeters above the ground, others 15 centimeters – at any rate not at ground level. The roots then remain intact. After a while these roots grow again into a full-grown warimbo. Above all, the plants may not be cut if they are too young, because they still need to grow. (Erowarte)

One should not just cut and burn [trees], especially not the young plants. (Langamankondre)

Rule II Use only what you need

Hunting and fishing

If you have caught a lot of fish and you go [fishing] again, people think you're greedy, and you won't find anything. You can't use it all, so it's a waste. (Pierrekondre)

A pingo is a big peccary. If you've gone far away to hunt, you can only shoot one, because you can't carry more, so it's useless to shoot more. (Alfonsdorp)

Also, animals that cannot be eaten, for example the djindjamaka (South American tree porcupine) [K. melejoe] are not shot. And animals that live high in the trees and are difficult to shoot. The reason is that they sometimes get stuck and it can make it difficult for the hunter if he has to climb after it. (Christiaankondre).

If you know that you can't carry it, don't shoot too much [because you'll] end up leaving it behind. (Christiaankondre).

For example, you're alone in the forest and you see a flock [of pingo] approaching and you shoot them, all the while knowing that you can't carry them. It's better to shoot one or two, or as many as you can carry, because if you shoot more, they'll just rot away and the nocturnal animals of prey will eat them. (Christiaankondre)

As a matter of principle the indigenous people determine how much game to shoot. They take into account the distance they have to carry the animals – be it one or two. Most of the time it's the non-indigenous people who go to a certain area and hunt and shoot at random. These outsiders are also the ones that wipe out fish and game. (Marijkedorp)

[You may] not shoot for fun and leave the dead animal behind. (Marijkedorp)

I shoot what I need for food. The indigenous people shoot game for subsistence, not to eradicate it. (Erowarte).

Some hunters use certain secret knowledge to ensure a good catch, for example by using certain plants (...). But you may not use this knowledge too often and also not shoot too much, for example for commercial reasons. Only what you need. Otherwise it will backfire on you. You might cut yourself, or become paralyzed. You have to use your knowledge for pure reasons. Moreover, the rule is that you must always try first with your own luck before you use that knowledge. And if you want more than you originally determined when making your preparations (...) you must still rely on your own luck. (Alfonsdorp)

The hunter shoots what is needed; he respects nature. (Christiaankondre)

Box 9.2 Use of neku

Neku is one of the plants that can be used for stunning the fish. Its use is confined by strict rules (see Chapter 6).

"The indigenous people know exactly how much neku they need. This technique is only used in small creeks or in side creeks and that area alone is treated. The big creeks are too big. Because if you kill all those fish, what will you eat tomorrow? We do have rules!" (Bigiston)

"...but small fish also get killed, which is why we don't use it anymore".

"We do not use neku, nor do we use the very poisonous koenami. If there is anyone who still does, we talk to the perpetrator, he is reprimanded and given more information so that the next fishing season is secured for the community". (Alfonsdorp)

"The use of neku is in effect forbidden; the aim being to ensure that the fish do not run out or become extinct". (Christiaankondre)

Plants and trees

Furthermore you may not cut open the forest for no reason. The land must genuinely be cultivated. (Marijkedorp)

[wood]species that you cannot use, may not be cut at random. (Bigiston)

[about logging] I use everything, down to the last shavings. I use the leftovers to repel mosquitoes [with the smoke]. (Christiaankondre)

You may not just randomly cut wood that you're not going to use; and you may not cut everything down, or we will have nothing left later on. (Christiaankondre)

It would be good to replant certain (different) wood species that we cut down, so they don't run out. (Christiaankondre)

If we do not stick to the rules, if we just cut like mad, then it's very likely that we'll lose certain species of wood. (Christiaankondre)

The species I don't cut are the ones I don't use and I save other species for other purposes. (Christiaankondre)

Yes, there are rules, you may not eradicate everything without consideration. It must be protected and we must know how to deal with the forest, we as indigenous people. (Christiaankondre)

Of course there are rules. One of the rules says that you may not cut a tree or a plant just like that. You must really protect and preserve it. (Christiaankondre)

You may not cut wood just like that without making use of it; also the Kumbu palm (K. kumu) may not be cut down nowadays, because it is decreasing in number. (Christiaankondre)

Kattensnor (purple loosestrife) is a medicinal plant, you may not pick it for no good reason. (Marijkedorp)

One may not cut certain wood species any more such as, for example, kumbu palm for the fronds for building shelters; that is why nowadays people have generally started using zinc sheets. (Bigiston)

Certain wood species may not be cut, for example mango trees and other domestic trees; so any trees in the village may not be cut just like that. We need the trees for oxygen, also for their shade and the fruits for food, so we must look after them and try to protect them. (Christiaankondre)

Special species

From the above we have seen that excessive or unnecessary use of animals, fish or plants, or of young specimens is forbidden according to indigenous customary law. In addition, there are certain animals and plants that are to be avoided altogether. These include *tapijt* snakes (boa constrictors), manatees, dolphins and river otters. As far as the *tapijt* snake is concerned: “*If you kill one knowing that it is a tapijt snake, its spirit will haunt you and wipe out your whole family*”.

Sea turtles also fall within the category of animals that may not be killed. Every year four kinds of sea turtle come to lay their eggs on the sandy beaches along the coast and in the Marowijne River estuary:

1. Green turtle (Sr. *krapé*)
2. Olive Ridley (Sr. *warana*)
3. Leatherback (Sr. *aitikanti*)
4. Hawksbill (Sr. *karet*)

According to one informant there is also a fifth kind of turtle, the *walala*. This occurs more frequently in the waters of Brazil. It is smaller than the Olive Ridley – very small – just like a normal turtle.



Dolphins and sea turtles are not caught or eaten by the indigenous people (Photos: C. de Jong and K. Neke)



Box 9.3 The story of the dolphin and the manatee

There were once two sisters. Their parents had cut and cleared a piece of ground. The sisters had to go and plant it. Every day they went to the forest and took *kasiri* with them. But nobody knew what they did in the woods. One day their brother went to see how far they had got with the planting. He saw that nothing had been done. They had not been doing anything. He wondered then why they went into the forest. What did they do there? He decided to spy on the girls. One day he heard them shouting: “*aloewa loewa*”. The brother had climbed into a tree and saw that a tapir came. When the tapir was close to the girls he changed into a man. Then he made love to the girls. Then the brother became angry and went home and told his parents that the girls were doing nothing in the forest. They sent the girls to another family. The brother went back to the forest and called out the name the girls had shouted. Then the tapir came. The brother shot the tapir. After that he cooked the private parts of the tapir and gave them to his sisters to eat. He asked them if they liked it. They said yes. Then he told them what they had eaten. They became so sad that they each took a *koro* (water jug) and went to the river. They wanted to go away, because they felt angry and sad. The one sister asked the other: “what would you like to be?” She said: “I want to be a dolphin”. The other said: “then I want to be a manatee”. Then they went into the river with their jugs. And when the people went looking for the girls, they saw the jugs. It so happened that the girls had actually changed into a dolphin and a manatee.

This is the reason why the indigenous people do not eat dolphin (K. *iririgoela*) or manatee (K. *jalawa*). They believe that these two animals were human beings in the past. And if you fell into the water, they would come and help you. People respect these animals. That is why indigenous people do not eat them.

By Georgette Kumanajare

Sea turtles are not killed because it is believed that the grandfather (guardian spirit) of the sea turtle will become angry and will make the guilty person, or his family members, ill.

There are also species that are not killed because they are not edible (such as the puffer fish, K. *tamajakoe*, a poisonous fish species), because they are not considered food (lizards, *krab'dagu* – mangrove dogs, or raccoons – vultures), or because they are too small (have too little meat) and are therefore considered as waste (small monkeys, small birds). Snakes are killed, particularly poisonous snakes, but not eaten. Finally, many people also have a personal aversion (*refu* – taboo) to certain species, these are then not killed.

For both the Kaliña and the Lokono, the rule is that the following trees may never be cut down:

- *takini*
- *kumaka* (K.) (kapok tree)
- *uremari* or *urewari*
- *kwasini* (fig/forest cotton)

No agricultural plots are created where these trees grow and the areas are avoided, especially where these trees are numerous. The *takini* and the *uremari* play an important role in the work of the shaman. The juice of the *takini* is drunk and the bark of the *uremari* is used to make the cigars that the shaman uses during his sessions (see Box 9.3):

Tree species such as takini, kwasini and kumaka cannot be cut just like that, because these kinds of trees can be dangerous if you do not know how to handle them. (Christiaankondre)

The uremari is not cut down. A ladder or platform is made around the tree and at a certain height the inside of the tree bark is removed in one scroll and with that a kind of cigar or pipe is made that is only intended for the piay. Ordinary people cannot smoke it, it is a heavy dose, as a drug, only the piay can cope with it. He goes into a kind of trance.

Neither is the takini tree cut down. They [the piays] make a notch in the bark from which a kind of liquid or milk flows that is collected in cotton and leaves on the ground. This is done in a calabash. Someone visiting a piay for the first time drinks this and goes into a sort of trance. Then spirits approach him and he has to defeat them. It is a kind of initiation. The takini is a very poisonous tree (for man and animal) and there are many spirits in it. The piay alone does not die from the poison because he has a spirit that protects him. This shows whether someone is a real piay or not; it is a kind of test. Because someone who is not a piay will die from it. (Langamankondre)

The takini, kwasini, kumaka and urewari are not cut because from generation to generation it was passed on and told that evil spirits live in these trees and if you cut that tree, that spirit will do you harm. (Langamankondre)

Box 9.4 “*Becoming a Piay is a calling*”

Theodorus Sabajo from Bamboesi tells how he became a *piay*:

A feeling like I was drunk

I was 45 years old when I got the feeling that I was drunk, whereas I had not drunk any liquor. On that particular day. . . I got the feeling that I wanted to scream or run away; I had fallen into a trance. My parents then brought a medicine man to see what was wrong with me. That man had brought his maraka and *oelemarie* [cigar]. He took my hair and in the middle of my head he tied a piece of woven cotton. This calmed me down. Then he began to work on me with his maraka and *oelemarie*. He then said that the spirits of the people who lived over near the Ricanau mountains [where I used to play as a child] wanted me to do something good for them as a medicine man. There were good and evil spirits on me and the evil spirits had to be driven away and I had to keep the good ones to help the people. (. . .)

Another time that I got that same feeling was in Brokopondo during a procession of Maroons and indigenous people in commemoration of the first of July [emancipation day]. I was dressed completely in traditional costume. I was walking with another man in front, I had a maraka in my hand and the other man had a sambura. While I was walking I got the same feeling as the first time. I got help from someone in the group who knew something about evil spirits. When I got home I was shivering with fever, because the evil spirit had the upper hand. When that happened, three *piays* came to prepare the ceremony for me to become a medicine man. That was a three-month process.

The initiation

I had to have my own bench, three *oelemarie*, a maraka, a *pagara* [basket], tobacco, water and takini. There was dancing the whole day to the sambura and at night to the maraka. On the last day the master *piays* were present. I had to sit down on my bench and they told me that from this day on, I would have four eyes and that I should only do good things even if someone asked me to do something bad. Also, I personally should not throw water on the ground or touch tobacco in order to harm someone out of hatred, otherwise I would bring harm upon myself for which I would be fully responsible.

It is a calling

This is how I started to help people with their diseases. In the beginning you have to get used to the different types of diseases, especially with the non-indigenous people. With good preparation, it all goes well. The most important thing is that you have to call on the different good spirits to assist you. That is why I say that this is not something that is passed on from father to son, but that it is a calling.

Interview by H. Zaalman and H. Galgren

Box 9.5 Takini atjoeloe enenenbo (the takini shaman)

Interview with Albertus Sehoe, *piay* at Langamankondre, about the *piay*'s use of takini.

The takini tree

You may not approach the takini tree alone (without others). . . . A tree may be used only once. . . . A used tree has no power, it has no more good spirits, only evil spirits . . .”.

Training to become a *piay*

Once the days of fasting have started, the leader brings you to the (takini) tree. The leader talks to the tree before he starts to cut the bark to collect juice from it. The evening before, they first '*piay*' so that everything will go well. The leader collects the juice with some cotton into a bottle. Sometimes a leader gives his apprentice juice to drink straight (from the tree). On returning home, the leader gives you the juice to drink. Then you then withdraw immediately into the *tokai* or trance hut. The leader has to be with you. You get one or two glasses to drink. After a few minutes the *jakoewa* approach you, the good spirits. You hear from the leaders that they are the *jakoewa*. From that moment you remain in the *tokai* for a week. All day, every day is spent learning how to sing and to play the maraka. At night you fall into a trance. The leader tells his *jakoewa* that he is training someone. You learn from the *jakoewa* how you have to talk, how your voice must change. This happens by itself, you learn a lot from the *jakoewa*: how to heal the sick, how to summon the *jakoewa*. The songs that are sung are called *aremi* songs.

In the morning the new shaman is brought to the waterfront. The leader has the maraka in his hand and sings the *aremi* songs. The ceremony, the celebration, begins. The new shaman is given tobacco juice to drink. After having drunk this, (the drinking of the juice is called *tame-atjoeloe*) they move on to drinking the two types of *kasiri*: the boiled and the baked types. This is done, as it were, to cleanse the body, to cleanse the body of disease. The *kasiri* is drunk to purge the tobacco juice that was drunk first. He has to vomit; it has to be removed. At night the shaman falls into a trance. He calls upon the good spirits to drive the evil spirits away. He has to gain experience and gets this with the help of the *jakoewa*.

Takini as medicine

From the leader the new shaman gets the takini juice in a bottle with the takini bark inside. This is then his medicine. With this he must also help other people who are ill, people who turn to him to be healed. When a sick person comes to see a shaman, the shaman falls into a trance. He asks his patient what his trouble is. He has to ensure that his patient becomes better. By talking to the *jakoewa* you can heal the patient because the *jakoewa* teach you how to heal the patient. While you are in trance they tell you what can happen. The *jakoewa* protect the shaman. If someone is ill, the shaman can give the sick person a little takini juice (*takini atjoeloe*) to drink”.

A woman can also become a shaman. It is not impossible just because she is a woman. If she has the help of the *jakoewa* she can heal people, because that is what it is all about.

Interview by S. Oeloekanamoe and S. Majorawai

Sacred and special sites

Within the indigenous territory of the Lower Marowijne there are certain places that count as sacred or spiritual sites. These areas are either completely avoided or only visited for hunting or fishing during the day, not at night, or alternatively only entered by the *piays* (for example where the takini tree grows, see Box 9.4). Table 9.1 gives an overview of these places.

Table 9.1 Special sites/forbidden sites

Name	Comments
The Galibi/Marowijne river area	
Kumakande	An area full of <i>kankantrie</i> (kapok) trees. <i>“There are areas that are not used, that are not suitable for the indigenous people if there are a lot of kankantrie trees. This tree must be respected or else you can become ill”.</i>
Kwasjini Oende	<i>Boskatoen</i> (forest cotton) tree
Panato	In French Guiana
Korotoko yume	In the Wane Creek area. Means “king of the cockerels”. People say that you can see and hear a spirit in the form of a large chicken or cockerel. Is visited during daytime, but less so at night. Is dangerous. There are water spirits, monsters and the like.
Marakam Creek	In French Guiana. <i>“This is a very deep branch of the Lower Marowijne River. They say that if you fish there, the nets will be sunk by a water monster”.</i> <i>“I had been told that it was dangerous to fish there because the water turns there with great speed so you can’t fish. You can get all sorts of fish there that you find in the sea. Why? They say that when God let the water cover the earth (the flood) sea fish remained behind and that is why they are still in this creek. Others say that there is a tunnel from the sea to the creek. But I don’t fish there, I have seen that it is dangerous”.</i>
Sek’seki sabana	Near Oetapo. Not used as a hunting ground; is a drift-swamp. <i>“In the past when the Europeans worked [at Oetapo] they tried to get into it. They never succeeded in getting across. If you go in, it’s as though your whole body starts shaking”.</i>
Alakoeserie bate	<i>“Also a sacred site; there are ghosts there”.</i> Here you hear voices and shots and noises. You can also find pieces of pottery.
Masjipe Itjoeloe	Means “long forest”. <i>“I don’t know whether people have ever lived here. This forest is dangerous. If you don’t know the forest, you’ll get lost. A hunter did hear voices here. He heard singing in the distance, when he got closer, he saw things moving in the distance; he didn’t go any further, but he saw dark-colored people”.</i>
Kanawa	<i>“Sometimes you hear sounds there, voices of people as though they’re approaching you and then again as if they’ve passed you by; but you mainly hear those sounds if you’re hunting alone. There are fruit trees there and under the trees it is always cleared as if someone has raked it. Maybe there were indigenous people there that disappeared, that you cannot see, but who can see you. I’ve heard this story from my father, who in turn heard it from his father”.</i>
Around Koffiekondre	<i>“There are places that are dangerous, though. Once I was in lower Koffiekondre. It was dusk and I had cast a net. Suddenly something emerged out of the darkness, something very big and then the thing went down into the water again. I was frightened, of course. I began to pull in the net that I had cast, but it was as if something almost at the end of the net was holding it back. Then I cut off the rest of the net with my knife and went away. Ever since then I have never gone fishing around there again. I know there’s something there. It is a okojoemo (water spirit)”.</i>
Around Alfonsdorp/Wane Creek	
The fishing grounds in the Lintie-mani region	<i>“Armata Creek is a long way from the inhabited village area and there are the takini tree, the posentrie tree (possum wood) and the kankantrie tree (kapok). These are dangerous for humans”.</i>
Dede Betre	<i>“This means ‘Death is better’. This place is so named thanks to the fact that it is very hard to reach. Before you reach the high forest, you have to cross a large, wide savanna. It also has quicksand. This big savanna is connected to the savannas behind Galibi. It is very dangerous to cross this savanna. It is therefore advisable that a hunter does not go alone”.</i>

Name	Comments
Balakaiman	<i>"In the long rainy season when the water is high, the waves can get very big and the water becomes very turbulent. It is a big (open) savanna that gets flooded in the long rainy season (high water). At night it is said that an Apintiedron (drum) can be heard. The place then becomes ice cold. That is a sign that you have to get away from there".</i>
Awaradaja	<i>"There is an awara tree here, a symbol of the runaway negro slaves (Lowé Nengre) and the indigenous people. In former times at this place indigenous people were killed by the Lowé Nengre. When the indigenous people went to Albina to do their shopping they were not attacked then, but on their way back. They were killed and robbed of their possessions. The men were all killed, the women were taken away. In the beginning the indigenous people did not know why people kept away from there. Even boats were sunk. So they left no trace. As time went by, the indigenous people discovered what was going on. They sought a solution and this was found by a piay. He would fight the leader of the Lowé Nengre. For this fight he had three bottles of crushed pepper (Djogo taja) and three different feathers. He camouflaged himself and started the fight. Beforehand he had given his wife instructions and during the fight she dipped the appropriate feather in the crushed pepper. The powder came into the eyes of the negroes' leader and made him lose the fight. The indigenous people were released by the piay and the Lowé Nengre moved deeper into the forest. People live under the belief that there are still Lowé Nengre. This is perhaps a legend in the outside world, but to the indigenous people it is a true story. The awara tree is still standing tall and if you were to go there and touch or knock on the tree, you would certainly be surprised by heavy rains and the water in the rivers would rise (heavy flooding). In the morning the water would drop again. Naughty boys sometimes dare each other to yell out: "Awaradaja", then knock ton-ton-ton on the tree and wait to see if anything happens. What I say is, if there are any disbelievers, they should go and camp there for the night. They'll see for themselves what happens".</i>
Places where there are Kantamasies	<i>"Also if there is a Kantamasie, it is better to avoid that place [do not cut open agricultural land]. There are, however, people who with their spiritual knowledge can make the Kantamasie move away. The Kantamasie has a round growth, like a termites nest, except that it is covered with white foam. When you can see the foam, that means he is angry". "You may not touch a Kantamasie (K. kubisha). They say that it has an evil spirit".</i>
The Bigiston area	
Jorka-creek and Zwampoe	<i>"These places are forbidden grounds, they are haunted".</i>

Observance and enforcement of rules

The rules described in this chapter belong to the unwritten law of the indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne, also designated "indigenous customary law". Although the rules have not been written down, this does not mean that one need not respect them. There are sanctions in the event that these rules are violated. These may be "spiritual sanctions" in the form of diseases, accidents or misfortune that the violator or his family may suffer:

"If you do not comply with the rules, the following things may happen: you become ill, you lose your way and never return home; you have an accident in the forest, for example, a tree might fall on you". (Alfonsdorp)

"Without rules there are many things that can happen to you, for example you can get lost in the forest, and you can become ill. You have to respect nature". (Christiaan kondre)

In these cases the shaman has to be involved to mediate with the spirit world.

“One male forest spirit is Imiawale. He will bother this woman [who during her period went to her agricultural plot], for example, in her dreams, in the appearance of a man. He will beg her to be with him and she will become ill. Then she has to go to the piay. He will then talk to this Imiawale”.

But the rules are also enforced by internal control: *“Hunters call each other to account about certain things, as they don’t want others to go and alert the captain, for example”* says an informant from Pierrekondre.

Finally, the village administration plays an important role in complying with and enforcing traditional rules (see Box 9.5):

“What happens if the rules aren’t obeyed? You can then get into trouble with the village authorities”. (Bigiston)

“Rules as regards wood-cutting are imposed by the village administration, which includes: asking permission; not cutting wood arbitrarily; not leaving cut wood to rot away for no reason. . . . The village administration must ensure that people do not just cut wood on impulse and is in fact accountable for the forest”. (Marijkedorp)

The final chapter will further elaborate on the increasingly important role of the village administration and the *Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden-Marowijne* (Committee for Land Rights of the Indigenous People of the Lower Marowijne) (CLIM) that was established in 2003, in enforcing existing rules and in laying down new laws on sustainable use of the Lower Marowijne area.

Passing on of rules

From their parents or grandparents children learn by doing, but they also learn from their peers and older siblings, how to treat nature. Accordingly, while fishing, hunting or working on the agricultural plot:

“We teach the youngsters to protect the fish population; we teach them where they should and should not fish. If they do not comply with the rules, they get a two-week punishment. They may then not go fishing”. (Bigiston)

[About the use of secret knowledge] *“Care is taken when passing on knowledge to youngsters because they do not want them to abuse it or be careless with this knowledge”.* (Alfonsdorp)

“We tell the younger ones what the consequences are if you cut down trees”. (Marijkedorp)

“How do you ensure that this knowledge does not get lost? I’ve already told you that I bring my sons to the forest myself to show them what I do, because when I’m no longer here, they’ll have to do these things themselves”. (Erowarte)

The coming of the school, and children consequently having less time to go along on fishing or hunting expeditions, is playing a significant role in the loss of traditional knowledge. In the next chapter we will elaborate on these and other threats to traditional use of the Lower Marowijne area.



Children go with their parents to learn from them
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)

Box 9.6 The village administration

Interview with village leaders Ricardo Pané, Harold Galgren, Ramses Kajoeramari and assistant district secretary Vincent Aloema

All eight indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne area have their own village administration. The village administration consists of a village leader (*Kaliña yopoto*; Lokono *wakorokoro*) and at least one, but generally more village assistants or *basyas*. (*K. yopoto petjore* or *yopoto pokorono*).

Succession

Traditionally the founder of the village who had originally opened up the area to live there, would become the leader. Thereafter a new leader would be appointed by the elders. "He had to be an active man who was respected, was intelligent and could do everything: build boats, hunt, fish, and establish agricultural plots. And most of the time he would be a piay. The leader might also propose to the elders that one of his sons be his successor and would ask for their agreement".

In Christiaankondre the first leader was Christiaan Pané, the founder of Christiaankondre. After him came Ernest Aloema. He was not Christiaan's son, but the District Commissioner had come and asked who should become the new village leader. One of the elders then said: let him do it, he is brave. Ernest then became the leader. Ernest appointed his youngest son, Augustinus, to become captain. After him the current village leader, Ricardo Pané, was appointed. He was appointed by the elders. He was brave and he was the great-grandson of Christiaan Pané.

In Langamankondre the first leader was Mariwaju. Thereafter, his son became leader and his son after him (Max Langaman). The current village leader, Ramses Kajoeramari, was appointed by the elders. Similarly, in other villages, leaders have been appointed, except for Marijkedorp, where elections are held.

Tasks and authorities

The village leader and assistants must, in the first instance, ensure that there is peace and order in the village. This includes taking measures when laws are violated. For example, theft from an agricultural plot. The thief can receive punishment such as having to open up a plot for the victim or for the village leader, go hunting or fishing or clean the village (do weeding). A beating may also be one of the possibilities. In addition, the village administration is responsible for implementing village policy, for example the building of a road or laying down a soccer field. The village administration mobilizes the people to carry this out. Another important function is mediating and solving conflicts in the event of quarrels between villagers or in marital problems. The village leader also plays a role with marriages: the young couple comes and notifies the captain that they are going to live together. Finally, when strangers come to visit the villagers, they must first report to the village leader; he is also the first contact person for official delegations (government, companies, organizations, and the like).



Village assistant Michel Barend receives the decree confirming his installation by (former) minister Romeo van Russel
(Photo: *De Ware Tijd*)

Recognition by the government

The village leaders and village assistants are officially installed by the government and are given a decree for these purposes, on the basis of which they receive a (small) monthly remuneration. Their position has not been recognized legally, though, and their authority and relationship with central government has not been formally laid down.

Chapter 10 Threats to and protection of traditional use of the Lower Marowijne area

The previous Chapters have shown how we, the indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne area, use the forests, creeks and rivers in a traditional manner. We have also shown that our unwritten rules are aimed at making use of the biodiversity in a balanced manner. Recently, however, we have experienced all kinds of changes that constitute a threat to the careful balance that our traditional management is trying to preserve. We have identified the following threats to our traditional use:

A Lack of recognition of the traditional authorities and laws

Our traditional authority, which is the oldest administrative system of Suriname and, as is evident from Chapter 9, still functions and plays an important part in the management of our territory, has never been legally recognized by our national government. It is true that our village leaders and village assistants are installed by the government and that they receive monthly remuneration from the State Treasury after their appointment or election by the community; their position, powers and tasks, however, have never been laid down by law. Our communities and the village councils do not have a legal personality and may consequently not institute legal proceedings in the event of our rights being violated or infringed. Only if we form a foundation [*stichting*] or association under Surinamese civil law, are we judicially recognized.

Nor is the traditional, unwritten law, that has been partially described in this report, recognized by Surinamese legislation. As a result we are unable to enforce our rules vis-à-vis outsiders if they do not comply with our rules, such as sport hunters who shoot game and then leave it behind to decay.

At the same time the government has instituted regional administrative bodies, the district and local councils, that function in the same area. No demarcation of the responsibilities of the regional bodies and the traditional authority has ever been laid down, as a result of which conflicts ensue. Nor does this contribute to an efficient enforcement of and compliance with rules that are aimed at preserving and protecting our territory.

B Mining and logging

In the areas that we have traditionally inhabited and lived from, a number of mining and logging concessions have been issued by the government. This has taken place without notifying our communities and village leaders, let alone consulting us or obtaining our consent. The Suralco concessions in particular, that exploit various bauxite mines in the Wane Creek area, constitute a great source of concern to our communities.

Within our traditional areas logging is being carried out under logging licenses (HKVs) issued to the village leaders of Maroon villages. According to our information, these HKVs are in the names of captains who are no longer alive and in one case, of a village that no longer exists. Nevertheless, large-scale logging is taking place within this area and we have learned that wood is even being cut in the Kanawa area, one of our sacred sites (see Chapter 9).

It has been observed that in the areas where mining or logging activities are taking place, the game is withdrawing and the fish stock is deteriorating. According to our hunters there are also fewer white-lipped peccaries because Suralco is constructing roads in the Wane Creek area and people are coming in and logging there. As a result of the construction of roads and the noise of the heavy equipment, as well as all kinds of people coming into the area to hunt, the game is retreating further into the forest. In addition, where logging is taking place on a commercial basis, the game population is dropping. Game also diminishes where certain tree species that bear forest fruits are cut down, such as the *pakoeli* tree, the *bolletrie*, *marmadosoe*, *boskasjoen*, or *merrie* tree. One hunter from Pierrekondre relates how he sometimes encounters outsiders in Wane Creek:

I don't mind meeting people from Galibi in Wane Creek, but I become angry if I see people in Wane Creek who are not from these areas (the lower Marowijne). But we can't do anything about it, because they come via the road that Suralco has built. Suralco is to blame. If Suralco wasn't looking for bauxite in the Wane Creek area, no roads would have been built there. This area belongs to the indigenous communities. Suralco has a mine there, but you are not allowed to come into the vicinity of this "mine". As a result of the noise of the mine, the animals are withdrawing deeper into the forest, making it more difficult to find them. Especially the big animals. (Pierrekondre)

If you go deep into the Bigiston forest, you will see the bulldozer path made by Patamaka and how Patamaka has come right into the forest. (Bigiston)

We are also concerned about the impact of the gold mining that is taking place at the upper course of the Marowijne. According to media reports hundreds of thousands of tons of mercury are dumped into the environment. We do not get information and we do not know whether the water that we use and the fish that we eat have been poisoned.

C Parcellization and issue of individual titles to outsiders

In villages where titles are issued to third parties (Pierrekondre, Marijkedorp, Erowarte), city dwellers are the ones who own the best properties along the river. We are forced to move back, inland, and as a result have reduced or no access to the river to moor our boats, to fish and to bathe or wash our clothes.

These titles have been issued without our foreknowledge and without our permission. When we protested against this, one of these titleholders summonsed our traditional authorities to appear in court. In his ruling the judge only concluded that the title of this gentleman was legally valid and that he was entitled to the undisturbed enjoyment of his property. So the judge completely ignored the fact that we have had the land in ownership for centuries – in any case long before the titleholder and the ones from whom he inherited the title. International rulings, such as that of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the *Awat Tingni*-case, confirm that our ownership of land based on our own traditional law, should be legally recognized.³⁵ The issuing of land in the Albina environs is, moreover, based on the original land title granted to Mr. Kappler. This land title clearly states that the issue of land does not extend to the indigenous people's settlements. Indeed, where there were indigenous people's settlements, Kappler "*would at all times respect these*", without "*ever disturbing them, much less to force them to move from there*" (see Chapter 1). The fact that the government knew and assumed that this land belonged to us, is also shown in a leasehold title issued in 1913 to the Dutch West Indian Coconut Company, in the process of which it was emphatically stated that the title did not extend to the areas on which the Amerindians were situated (see Table 3.1 "Old settlements in the Galibi area").



Sign near one of the holiday cottages in Marijkedorp

³⁵ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Judgment in the case of the Mayagna (Sumo) Indigenous Community of Awat Tingni v. the Republic of Nicaragua*, 31 August 2001, paragraph 151.

D Nature reserves

Three nature reserves have been established in the Lower Marowijne area. The Wia-Wia and Galibi Nature Reserves – both intended for the protection of the sea turtles that come to lay their eggs there every year – and the Wane Creek Nature Reserve. The Nature Conservation Act which dates from 1954 and which constitutes the basis for the protected areas, does not lay down any exceptions for the indigenous communities: hunting, fishing and the creation of agricultural plots are forbidden to everyone. The Nature Protection Decree of 1986 that establishes the Wane Creek Nature Reserve, does lay down a provision that protects the customary laws of indigenous communities. The decree in question does not, however, specify what these customary laws are. It also states that the customary laws should be taken into account “as far as possible”. Consequently this provision is not enforceable in court.

In the past Wane Creek was not a reserve and we were allowed to hunt freely. Now, according to peoples other than indigenous ones, it has become a nature reserve. Our hunting customs have not changed in this area; we hunt when we feel like hunting. The Wane Creek area is our former living area and therefore we consider it our property and nobody will prevent us from going there; Wane Creek is occupied by hunters and fishers throughout the year. (Marijkedorp)

None of these reserves was established with our *free, prior and informed consent*.

E Creation of the Hunting Act

Just as happened with the Nature Conservation Act, the Hunting Act and the Hunting Decree were created without involving us and without our consent. For most of us who have no permanent job, hunting is an important means of caring for our families. We need the meat for protein; with the money that we earn from it we send our children to school, buy clothes and foodstuffs, pay for the boat or bus to go to town when we are ill, etc. We are, however, being treated like any other hunter who hunts for sport or for purely commercial reasons. We are forced to apply for a hunting license, with all the associated costs, and if we are unable to submit the right documents, our hunting rifles are seized. The Hunting Act is aimed at protecting the game populations outside the nature reserves. We already know, however, how to deal with the game so that it does not become extinct. We know in which time the animals have young and, following our own traditional laws, we do not kill young or pregnant animals. This knowledge and these traditional rules are not taken into consideration at all.

F Presence of commercial fishermen

Illegal fishing boats from Guyana regularly fish in the Marowijne River estuary. They use nets that are kilometers long:

No Guyanese fishermen are supposed to come all the way down here with their kilometers-long nets and catch tons of fish without taking any responsibility, whereas we as indigenous people take great care to see that the fish populations do not run out.

There are certain fish species that you hardly see any more, such as the Granmorgoe (K. muruwaimo), which you see less and less, and the sawfish (K. karari) that used to occur in the estuary. The elders tell us that these fish have gone deep into the sea. According to a fisherman from Erowarte the numbers of koemaroe, a very expensive fish, are also decreasing. The same applies to the jarabaka.

Due to the fact that the traditional authorities and our traditional laws are not recognized, we are not able to take effective action against these illegal fishermen. Nor are the central authorities taking any steps to stop these fishermen, despite the repeated complaints we have lodged with the various agencies.

G Loss of traditional knowledge and culture

The traditional rules as to the use of the region risk being lost as education is almost entirely conducted in what is for us a foreign language (Dutch) and a foreign culture (town culture). Education also makes it less easy for our children to accompany their (grand)parents any more to get practical experience (during hunts, on the agricultural plot, while fishing) in using nature in a sustainable manner. So, for example, people do not stay for months at an agricultural plot because the children have to go to school. In the past the children were simply taken along. As a result, the knowledge that we have tried to record in this report, risks being lost.

Another cause of the loss of traditional knowledge is the influence of the various religions that have been introduced to the villages.

The growing influence of the monetary economy also plays a role in the decline of traditional knowledge and culture (see point H), particularly among the youth. Now that earning cash is becoming increasingly important in the villages, the children and youth are more focused on their education and getting a job (either in the town or not), from which a fixed income can be earned. They increasingly prefer this to subsistence hunting, fishing, agriculture and barter. As they go less frequently into the forest or to the river, a great deal of traditional cultural knowledge is being lost to them.

H Impact of the monetary economy (commercialization)

As has already been mentioned above, we are being greatly influenced by westernization, or the commercialization of life: nowadays everything costs money, and so more money has to be earned. Above, we described how our youngsters are more likely to seek paid jobs. Another consequence, which seems contradictory on the face of it, is that more hunting and fishing is taking place. After all, money can be made from the proceeds of the catch.

Because there is more commercial hunting and fishing, both by our people and outsiders in our area, some fish and animal species have come under pressure for survival (see Table 10.1):

There are, however, certain fish species that you hardly see any more . . . We believe this is also because in the past there were fewer fishermen than at present. Now there are (too) many fishermen.

Another threat related to external influences is the pollution of the water by all types of waste, such as old clothes, plastic bottles, footwear and oil bottles. In the past there was not this sort of pollution here.

People also blame the declining fish stocks on logging:

In the past there were . . . more trees along the river and you could find baboenhout [K. waloesji]. The fish like the seeds of these trees. The Maroons cut these trees down to make plywood. As a result only a few of these trees are left.

The informants are of the opinion that the civil war accelerated this process. Because of their enforced prolonged stay in the town or in French Guiana, many inhabitants have adopted urban culture. For example, more Sranan Tongo (Surinamese) is spoken and the children raised in town do not know the forest. Another result of the war is that various plant species were lost as people had to flee and could not return to collect plant stocks.

Table 10.1 Species that have declined noticeably in the Lower-Marowijne

Animals and birds	
<i>Pingo</i> (white-lipped peccary) <i>pakira</i> (collared peccary)	These have retreated deep into the forest due to the noise from logging activities by Suralco (mining) and Patamaka; their numbers have decreased because of the changed method of hunting (previously with bow and arrow, now with hunting rifles); they have also decreased because of the reduced number of fruit trees as a result of logging.
<i>Brulaap</i> (Howler monkey)	<i>Idem.</i>
<i>Keskesi</i> (Capuchin monkey)	<i>Idem.</i>
<i>Duikelaar</i> (Cormorant)	Still occurs in the swamps of Galibi
<i>Bosdoksi</i> (Muscovy duck)	Decreased due to excessive hunting
<i>Granman kapasi</i> (Giant armadillo)	Still found in the forests of Galibi
<i>Marai</i> (Marail guan)	Rarely occurs in the Galibi area
Fish	
<i>Granmorgoe</i> (Grouper)	Rare, due to excessive fishing
Sawfish	Only occurs near Eilanti; it is believed that they may have gone deeper into the ocean; under threat by illegal Guyanese fishermen who fish day and night with big nets
Plants and fruits	
Kumbu (oenocarpus bacaba)	This fruit is sold extensively; instead of climbing to pick the fruit, nowadays the entire tree is cut down. The tree no longer grows widely.

Initiatives to protect our area and lifestyle

The above-mentioned threats are resulting in our loss of control over the area and correspondingly our future as indigenous people. First of all, the area in which we can hunt, fish, build, plant and collect is getting smaller and smaller. Secondly, the biodiversity is also decreasing. Although the inhabitants are of the opinion that all the animals and plants are still in existence, we have observed that lately certain species have been harder to find. It is necessary to go deeper into the forest to find peccaries, to find wane wood, etc. Finally, the threats referred to lead to conflicts:

The conflicts that arise are mostly with the government in that the government grants concessions to people outside a village, without the knowledge of the village authorities, whereas these areas are used for hunting, fishing, agricultural plots and other purposes.
(Marijkedorp)

The indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne area are aware of the threats and have taken a variety of steps to protect their area.

International movement for indigenous rights

After the establishment of the Galibi Nature Reserve in the 1970s, an association was sought with the national and international indigenous movement. This movement encompasses hundreds of indigenous organizations all over the world. They meet annually at numerous forums to discuss their joint problems and to exercise influence on national governments and international organizations. They not only lobby to propose models for concrete solutions, but also make full use of the judicial possibilities offered by national and international legislation. In many countries this has led to amendments to the Constitution as well as new legislation that recognizes the rights of indigenous people to their traditional territory. Existing international treaties have been re-interpreted to provide scope for renewed understanding of the rights of indigenous peoples. Ever since the Awas Tingni case in 2001, the American Convention on Human Rights has also protected the collective land rights of indigenous peoples.

National campaigns

In Suriname the indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne area have been involved in the well known “Land Rights are Human Rights” campaign since the seventies. Many inhabitants still remember the protest march from Albina to Paramaribo, when a petition was offered to then Prime-Minister Arron to recognize their rights to land. However, there has never been a concrete response to this. Furthermore, the government’s promises after the civil war to establish “economic zones” around the villages, as laid down in the Lelydorp Peace Agreement, were never fulfilled.

In the 1990s pressure on the indigenous and Maroon areas was increased when the government announced its plan to grant three million hectares of forest to Asian logging companies. The indigenous people and the Maroons responded by joining forces during the *Gran Krutu’s* (Great Assemblies) held in 1995 and 1996. However, not one response was made by the government to the petitions and resolutions that emerged from these *Krutu’s*.

Organization

After the civil war the “Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname” (Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname) (VIDS) was founded with the aim of restoring the traditional authority of the indigenous people in Suriname. The village leader from Christiaankondre is chairman of this organization and Marijekdorp’s village leader was a member of the board for a number of years. Since then VIDS has developed into a professional organization with its own secretariat in Paramaribo, with five full-time workers devoted to the organization’s main objective: obtaining legal recognition and protection of the collective land rights of indigenous people in Suriname, and contributing to the sustainable development of indigenous communities. Since its formation VIDS’ achievements have included: connecting over 20 villages to a radio network; helping to draw up two demarcation maps (in Lower Marowijne and West Suriname); holding of numerous workshops in the villages to inform the people about their rights; providing instruction to a group of 10 trainers in the international rights of indigenous people in Suriname; and helping with the establishment of the “Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden-Marowijne” (Committee on Land Rights of Indigenous People of the Lower Marowijne) (CLIM).

The Commissie Landrechten Inheemsen Beneden-Marowijne (CLIM)

During the third VIDS conference in 1996 it was decided that the eight communities of the Lower Marowijne should join forces to work on gaining judicial recognition of one collective area.

In 2000 the area that the eight communities traditionally use and occupy was mapped. This map gives an overview of the natural resources and the places that are traditionally occupied and used by the indigenous people. In 2003 the communities submitted a petition to the government requesting the creation of a government committee with which the Lower Marowijne villages would be able to negotiate about legal recognition of their land rights.

After the first petition, three meetings were held with the government. These talks, however, did not lead to any concrete results. The same year a judicial investigation was carried out



**Village leader Ricardo Pané presents the map of the Lower Marowijne area to the Dutch Ambassador
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

into the possibilities for and obstacles to judicial steps in Suriname and within the Inter-American Human Rights system; workshops were held in all eight villages to explain Surinamese and international legislation relating to the land rights of indigenous people. All the villages stated their preference for collective rights. In December 2003 CLIM was established.

CLIM's aim is to obtain judicial recognition and protection of the land rights of the indigenous people of the Lower Marowijne. The organization is a subsidiary of VIDS and consists of all the village leaders of the eight communities, plus one person from each village.

In 2004 a second petition was presented to the government, but this elicited no reaction either. In addition, CLIM wrote letters to the DC (District Commissioner) and the State Property Department requesting that they stop or put on hold all applications for land until collective land rights had been recognized. Potential legal proceedings are also being prepared using an archival investigation into the historical occupancy of the Lower Marowijne area since the arrival of the Europeans. The current investigation into the area's traditional use also falls within this framework, by contributing both to a better understanding and implementation of article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to the land rights claim of the indigenous communities.

On August 7, 2005 the CLIM secretariat was officially opened in Marijkedorp. On that occasion it was also decided to send a third and final petition to the government.

Next steps

At present CLIM is in the preparatory phase of possible negotiations with the government with the aim of reaching a decision on the legal recognition and protection of their land rights. The communities have decided that if this process is not productive, they will seek a solution via the Inter-American Human Rights system. The recent ruling of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights in the *Moiwana* case, where the Court deemed that it had been established that Surinamese law does not allow for indigenous and tribal populations to obtain collective title, makes it possible to skip the step to the national court.

In the coming years, the indigenous communities plan to focus on developing an integral management and development plan for the sustainable use and management of their area. In doing so, their aim will be to integrate western and traditional knowledge for the protection and the use of the Lower Marowijne.



**The village leaders and assistants of the eight Lower Marowijne communities during the opening of CLIM's office on August 7, 2005
(Photo: E.R. Kambel)**

Summary and conclusion: traditional use and management in the context of article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity

We, the indigenous inhabitants of the Lower Marowijne, are attached to our traditional territory in a variety of ways. Firstly, through history and our ancestors. We have been living here for centuries; our ancestors are buried here; this is where the stories and legends that were told to us by our elders (see Chapters 2 and 3) take place. This is also the place where the old settlements are hidden that are no longer visible to the outsider, but which we can find without any problem and where we still regularly return (Chapter 3).

Secondly, the Lower Marowijne area is our territory; it provides us with everything we need in order to live:

We are indigenous people. We do not need a supermarket. Here we can find everything we need to live. We have everything! But if an outsider would come here, he would not know how to survive. They are not used to it, they do not know the forest, neither the river nor the methods. (Langamankondre)

The Lower Marowijne area is our home, it is the area that we know. We know exactly where everything is: the best places to hunt, where you should fish, where you can find seeds to make ornaments, where the best clay can be found for pottery, when you can best plant and harvest (Chapters 4 – 8). It is this traditional knowledge that is so precisely geared to the place we occupy and live that makes us so attached to the area. In another environment, our hunters would get lost, the seasons and the times for fishing may be different and we would also not know where you may not go or if they are dangerous.

We do not only know where everything is in the Lower Marowijne area, but we also know how to use things in such a way that they do not get depleted. This is because we believe in preserving a balance between man and nature. A hunter explained this as follows:

Sometimes it is necessary to leave behind the head of the animal or the intestines. Nature demands that you leave something behind, so you must give something back. Nature gives you luck and you should also give something that can be eaten because the indigenous people believe in nature. (Christiaankondre)

Excessive or purposeless use disrupts the balance between man and nature. In order to prevent this, there is a range of unwritten rules one must comply with. Violation of these rules may have all kinds of spiritual consequences, such as illnesses and accidents that can only be remedied through the intervention of the *piay*. In addition to the *piay*, the village leaders and internal social controls also play an important role in enforcing the traditional rules that aim to maintain the balance between man and nature (Chapter 9). Avoiding certain areas and species also form part of these traditional rules. In practice this leads to the protection of the areas and animal and plant species. We do not need nature reserves to protect biodiversity; our unwritten rules protect nature in the entire region.

Indigenous people and communities are not static units. We are constantly reacting to changing circumstances and external influences. Traditional methods are adjusted and improved. Examples that come to mind are the introduction of the hunting rifle, the *tramail* fishing net and the outboard motor, all of which have made hunting, fishing and transport over water far more efficient (Chapter 4 through 8). However, changing times, new methods and changing awareness, both within the community and beyond, also bring threats. Certain species appear to be under greater pressure due to increased commercial hunting and fishing and we are losing control over the areas we occupy as the government creates nature reserves and issues licenses for logging and mining without consulting us and without our consent. As a result we can no longer live freely in our own territories.

But we are not standing by and watching the new threats powerlessly. We are actively engaged in protecting our area: by mapping our territory, through the formation of CLIM, and by entering into dialogue with the government about legal recognition of our living space. In addition, within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity Convention this project constitutes part of this conviction to protect the lifestyle of the indigenous people of the Lower Marowijne – a lifestyle that, as this report shows, is closely attached to the area itself.

Article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity

The indigenous communities of the Lower Marowijne area are not the only peoples to manage their ancestral territories in a sustainable manner. Research has shown that places traditionally inhabited and used by indigenous populations generally have a high biodiversity. Combined with the methods of land use described in this report and that are in harmony with the environment, indigenous forms of traditional management have, through the ages, ensured that the natural resources in the region continue to be cared for.

This is recognized by the Convention on Biological Diversity. After all, it is this “Customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements”, to which Article 10 paragraph (c) of the CBD refers. Article 10(c) requires that there is clarity about the lands, the waters and the natural resources held in traditional ownership. It also requires that customary law systems and institutions related to the management and the ownership of traditional lands and waters, are recognized and protected. This is confirmed by the executive secretary of the CBD (see Introduction) and by the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity* (adopted by COP VII). These principles are broadly in agreement with the international human rights norms that recognize and protect the rights of indigenous people to ownership of and authority over the lands, territories and natural resources that they have traditionally held or otherwise occupy and use.

Recommendations to the government

We call upon the government to implement all the international conventions it has ratified, including article 10(c), and to recognize and protect our rights to land, territories and resources that we traditionally own or otherwise occupy and use.

To this end, Suriname ought, amongst other things:

- to take effective measures to lay down in law the collective rights to ownership, use and management of the area by the eight indigenous communities, as well as legally regulating and implementing the demarcation and delimitation of the area in question;
- to give legal recognition to our traditional authorities and our own indigenous laws;
- to revoke all current logging and mining concessions, logging licenses and individual land titles, until our land rights have been legally recognized and our territory demarcated;
- not issue new mining or logging concessions without our free, prior and informed consent until such time as our land rights have been legally recognized and our territory demarcated;
- not implement or develop other projects that might impair our traditional use and management of our land and natural resources and particularly our sacred sites, without our free, prior and informed consent;

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- to revoke the nature reserves that have been established within our territory; we already consider the entire Lower Marowijne as a protected area and will continue to manage and protect this area for the coming generations;
 - to implement all aforesaid measures with our full participation and our free, prior and informed consent pursuant to the international human rights norms that apply to Suriname;
 - to kick-start a dialogue with our communities on bilingual and multi-cultural education;
 - to make funds available to our communities to establish and implement a management plan for the Lower Marowijne area. We have been managing this area for centuries, but in the face of new threats we need new methods and means to continue to protect it.

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Annex People interviewed

Alfonsdorp	Langamankondre
1 Theodorus Sabajo	28 Hendrik Alemware
2 Alwien Sabajo	29 Francisca Asjake
3 Floris Ligor	30 Christina Malajuwara
4 Margaretha Biswane-Karwafodi	31 Nelly Oeloekanamoe
5 Katrina Sabajo	32 Gerard Langaman
	33 Adeleida Awarajari
Bigiston	34 Magdalene MacIntosh
6 Emile Tawaramarie Awatjale	35 Robert Kajoema
7 Ajermi Rosalina Awatjale	36 Theresia Wengo
8 Foelibert Rudolf Barend	37 Iwan Oeloekanamoe
9 Leo Dellius Mac-Intosh	
10 Wilhelmina Panate Mac-Intosh	Marijkedorp
11 Jozef Sjabere	38 Augustinus Jubitana
12 Elisabeth Barend	39 Remy Jubitana
13 Reinier Barend	40 Wilfert Zaalman
	41 Joseph Sabajo
Christiaankondre	42 Evert Barend
14 Cyriel Pané	43 Louisa Jubitana
15 Roland Maleko	
16 Carolus Awankaroe	Pierrekondre
17 Christiaan Pane	44 Ronny Biswane
18 Reinard Tapoka	45 Maria W. Sjapeki Malbons
19 Hein Langaman	46 Pierre Jules
20 Ricardo Pane	
21 Silverius Aloema	Tapuku
22 Silvester Sehoe	47 Alwin Colom
	48 Pauline Pierre
Erowarte	49 Johanna Maria Kairame
23 Agnes Brando-Voorthuizen	50 Eleonora Kairame-Aluma
24 Leendert Tayuko	
25 Laurents Brando	
26 Laurence Brando	
27 Frits Sjapeki	

In 1996 Suriname ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and is therefore obliged, under the terms of Article 10(c) to: *“Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements”*.

This report, **Marauny Na’na Emandobo Lokono Shikwabana (Marowijne – our territory)**, was written by the indigenous peoples of Christiaankondre, Langamankondre, Erowarte, Tapuku, Pierrekondre, Marijkedorp, Bigiston and Alfonsdorp. They reveal how, for generations, they have made use of their territory in the Marowijne River area. Not only does the report describe traditional practices such as hunting, fishing, house- and boat-building, but it also details the customary laws and practices which have ensured that these peoples use the flora and fauna without destroying the rich biodiversity of the area.

This case study – an initiative of the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname, (VIDS), the Land Rights Commission of the Indigenous Communities of the Lower Marowijne (CLIM) and the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) – was carried out in response to a general call from the Parties to the CBD for information on the practical implementation of Article 10(c). Other countries in which similar case studies have been carried out by indigenous peoples include Cameroon, Thailand, Guyana and Venezuela.

In preparation for this project, local researchers were trained to interview members of their own communities and to record and gather information in

various ways. This was the first time that indigenous researchers had ever carried out research in their own villages.

This report and its recommendations has now been presented to the Government of Suriname. Not only does it contribute to the implementation of the CBD, but it also provides a unique record of indigenous knowledge – a resource that is on the verge of disappearing because the Surinamese education system makes no provision for transfer of this knowledge. The report also contributes to the long struggle by indigenous communities for recognition of their rights to land.

Despite the large number of international treaties that Suriname has ratified, it still does not recognize the rights of its indigenous peoples. Surinamese law continues to describe the land and all natural resources as being owned by the State. Ownership based on age-old traditions (customary rights) is not recognized by the State. By means of this report indigenous communities in the Lower Marowijne have produced documentary evidence both of their collective ownership of the land and territory on which they have lived for generations, and their long-standing use of natural resources.

