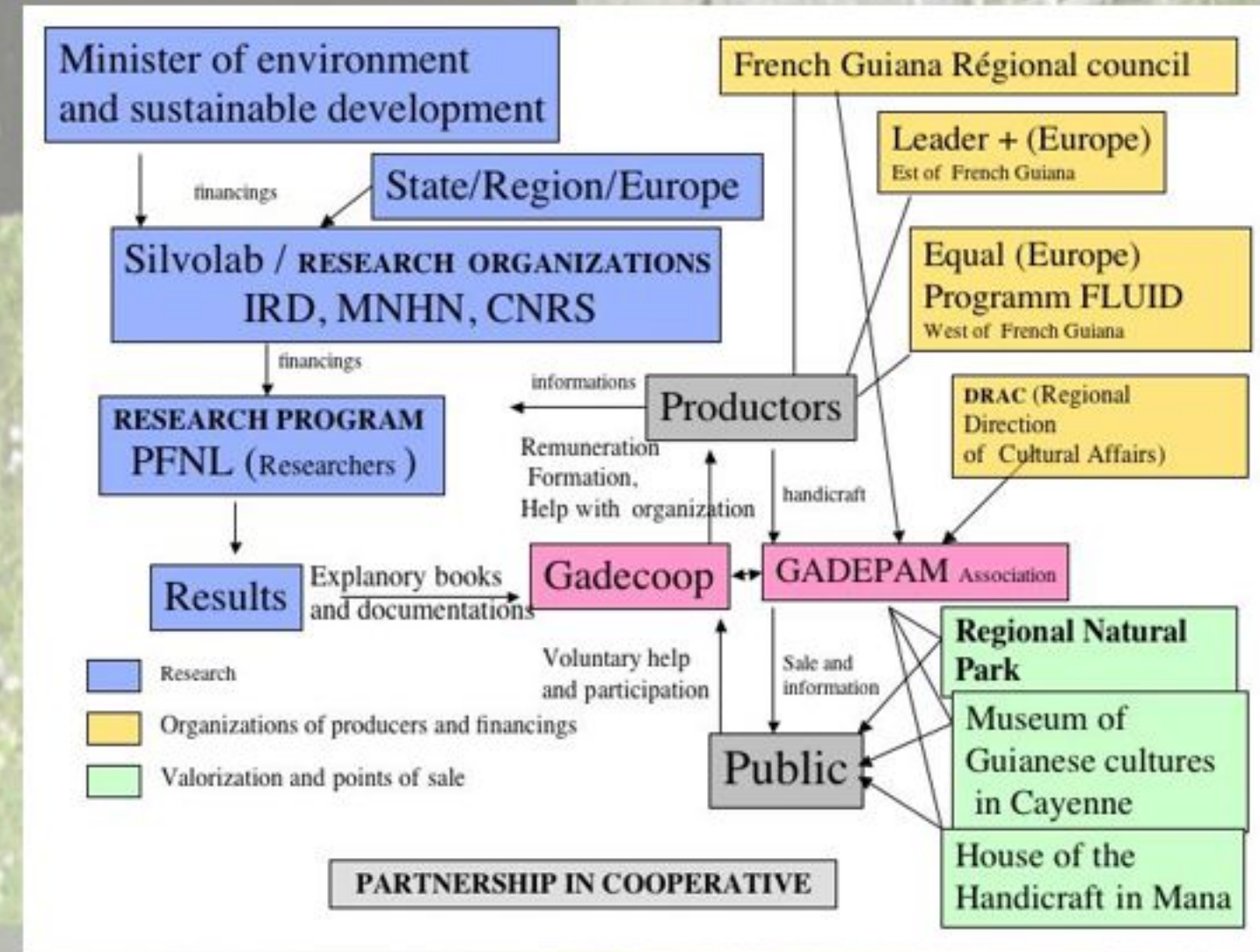




CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD) AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN FRENCH GUIANA: AN EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION OF RESEARCH IN ETHNOBIOLOGY



Pottery making demonstration



Basket weaving demonstration during the inauguration of the fair trade shop in November 2005



Apalai basketry



Wayampi basketry

INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) stipulates in article 8J : « Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices ».

The population of French Guiana is a cultural melting pot : Creoles, American Indians, Maroons, Chinese, Metropolitan, Brazilian, Haitian, Lebanese and Hmong people ... live in communities more or less integrated in the local political and economical life. They are concentrated for more than 90% on the narrow coastal strip, while the immense rain forest territory is thinly populated by American Indians and Maroons (and some Creoles) living mainly along two large river-borders : Oyapock and Maroni. Thus, there is a great gap between the north and the south. This is the ambivalence of this French overseas territory which, in spite of its French status, remains in many respects "a developing country", particularly in its southern part: villages without drinking water and electricity, very poor travelling means due to rivers which are intersected by rapids. Very few economic outlets exist in this southern rain forest, except a gold extracting activity which raises serious environmental and human problems. A large number of people depend on State welfare.

STAGES OF THE PROJECT

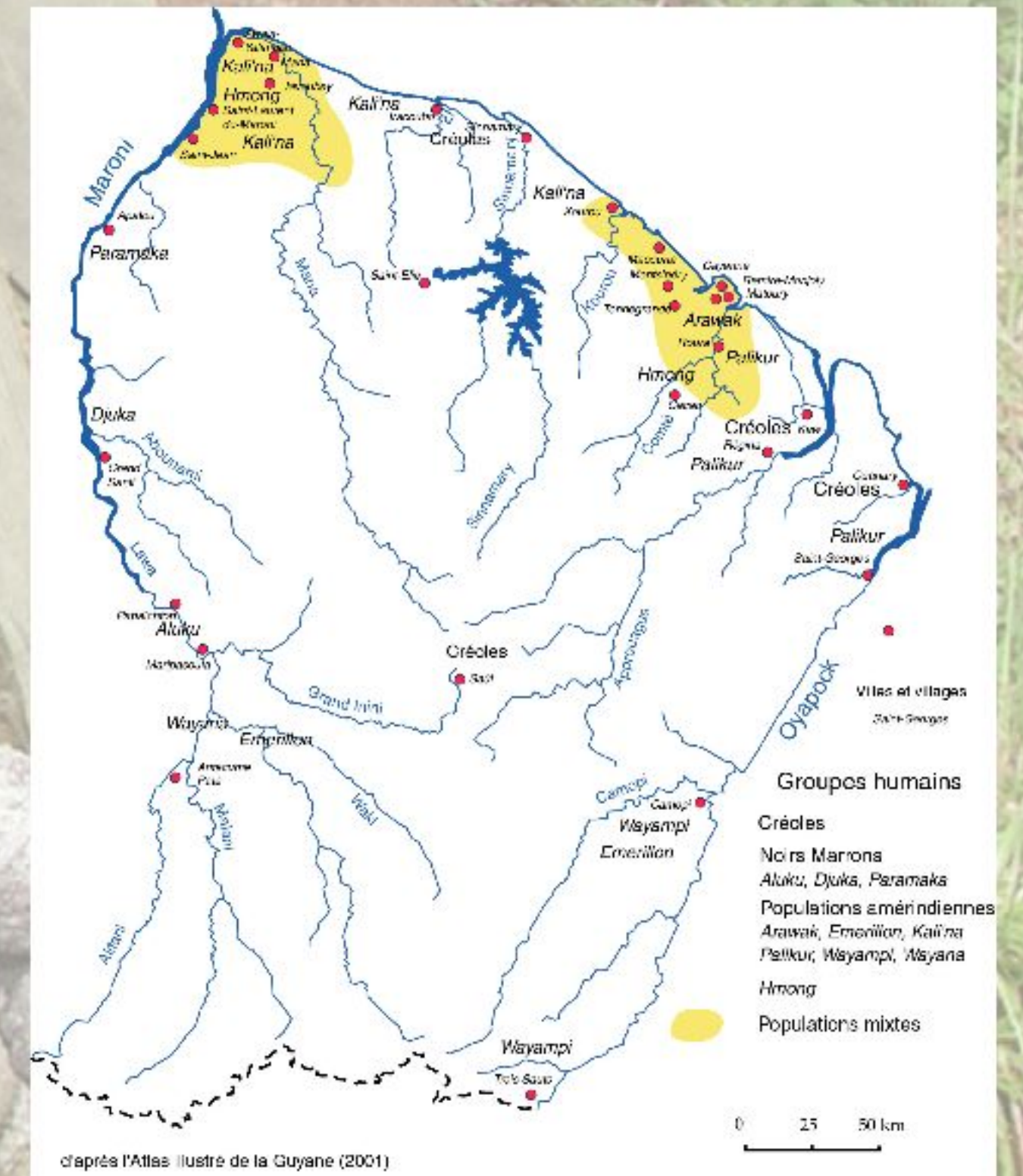
- ✓ Organization of a conference on " Research and valorization of forest products : which fair process? " in Cayenne in December 2002. One of the objectives of this conference was to identify sales channels for the forest products, respecting both Man and the environment in partnership with IRD (the French Institut de Recherche pour le Développement), the French Guiana local authorities and the French Ministry for Research
- ✓ The idea to create a cooperative for trade in "natural and traditional French Guiana goods" taking into account economic, cultural and environmental aspects to promote sustainable and fair development arose from informal and formal discussions during the conference, and because of the lack of outlets for handicraft trade from the south of French Guiana.
- ✓ This project is based on the results of a research program* on non timber forest products in French Guiana. The program objective is to get a better understanding of the spontaneous forest resources uses by local populations.

*This project is run by researchers from the French Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle (MNHN), IRD and Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), and funded by the Minister of Ecology and Sustainable Development, and through a contract between the State and French Guiana (CPER-DOCUP).



Preparation of Crabwood oil in Regina

Crabwood oil has anti-inflammatory and insect-repulsive properties



Créoles (Atlas: Institut de la Guyane (2001))

OBJECTIVES

- **To develop the knowledge and local know-how related to biodiversity.** Various points of sale are planned: in the Regional Natural Park, the Museum of Guianese cultures in Cayenne, and the House of Handicraft in Mana.
 - Promotion of traditional handcrafted goods through the publication of books explaining the cultural context of the objects on sale, their uses and their manufacturing processes as well as the resources used.
- **To entice youngsters to learn from the elderly.** Training courses will be organized within the villages. The quality of the market products being central in our concern, we plan to create two business plans : one concerning the products and the other the producers. The products will have to be approved by specialists selected in each community for their knowledge in specific traditional knowledge. The producers first concerned are the craftsmen living in isolated villages.
- **To obtain various labels,** in order to guarantee the quality of the products, while linking them to a territory: "Product of French Guiana", area of origin, agreement on the structure by "Artisans du monde", "fair trade" and the Regional Natural park brand are currently under consideration.



Making of a Wayana pottery



Wayana « Maluwana » representing mythical animals



Saramaka woodcarving in St Laurent du Maroni

EXPECTED RESULTS

- ❖ To make natural and traditional goods of quality available to the public, taking into account economic, cultural and environmental aspects to promote sustainable and fair development in French Guiana ;
- ❖ To take part in the social and economic development of the isolated populations, who are often poor, while promoting French Guiana biodiversity and cultural heritage ;
- ❖ To promote local arts and crafts and to prevent the loss of know-how through:
 - certification and labelling,
 - training of young people with the elderly,
 - the organization of the producers in associative and cooperative structures.



Wayana craftsman staining his arrows with a plant-based colorant (Bixa orellana L.)



The fair trade shop « GADECOOP » in Cayenne (Régional Natural Park)

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