

Project Update: September 2021

I. Introduction

We received a Booster grant of £ 10,000 to support the project entitled « Conservation of Threatened Lemurs in Andilambologno Forest, western Madagascar: Biological research, Habitat restoration and Community outreach ». This project lasted 2 years, starting in June 2018 and finishing in May 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Madagascar from March 2020; thus, the country was in lockdown for several months. Due to the travel restrictions throughout the country, we were not able to carry out our fifth awareness raising which was expected to take place in April 2020 during the celebration of the Earth Day. As result, this remaining activity was postponed. This year, the COVID-19 pandemic is still present in the island, but the country was not in lockdown and travel was restricted only in areas where the disease was present. We were able to conduct the remaining activity during the celebration of the World Environmental Day (WED) this year.

II. Methodology

The remaining activities took place during the celebration of the World Environmental Day and consisting of mangrove reforestation close to the forest of Andilambologno and an awareness raising within the village of the Mahitsihazo. The celebration of the World Environmental Day took place on the 19th June 2021. It is noted that the Andilambologno forest is not far from the Sahamalaza-Iles Radama National Park which is a complex of terrestrial and marine parks. The governor of the Sofia Region and the representative of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development organised the WED in Mahitsihazo. Local authorities and local stakeholders were invited to attend the mangrove reforestation including the governor of Sofia region, local representative of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, mayors, deans of schools, director of the Sahamalaza-Iles Radama National Park and country director of the Lemur Association NGO, AEECL. The reforestation took place in the morning of the 19th and an awareness raising organised by the Mikajy Natiora was carried out in the afternoon of the 19th.

III. Results

We produced 150 t-shirts and have distributed these during both events. We designed conservation message on the t-shirt. The conservation message is written in local language, Sakalava « **Miaro Akomba Mety aminaka** » which means « Protect Lemurs is benefitted for us ». Logo of the Rufford Foundation is also written on the t-shirt in both sides.

The mangrove reforestation took place in different sites and at least 100 people attended the reforestation. All local authorities and local stakeholders cited above received the t-shirts and wore these during the reforestation. During the distribution of the t-shirts, we explained the message written on them and raised their awareness about the importance of the protection of the lemurs and its forest habitat. The governor noted in his speech that from now they will wear the t-shirt for any environmental event.



Photo 1: Distribution of the T-shirts to the local authorities and stakeholders



Photo 2: Mangrove reforestation

We organised an environmental quiz to raise school children awareness about the importance and protection of the lemurs and its forest habitat. Approximately 50 children have participated to the quiz. Children that replied right questions received small prize and t-shirts. Teachers also received t-shirts.



Photo 3: Local team wearing T-shirts

We also distributed T-shirts to all guides working in the Andilambologno forest and some villagers also received T-shirts.



Photo 4: Local guides wearing the T-shirt during the lemur survey

IV. Conclusion

Overall, both activities went all, the local authorities and stakeholders were happy wearing the t-shirts. It is well designed, and the message is clear and comprehensible for all sex-age classes. More people asked for t-shirts, but we were not able to distribute them to the whole village. All people that received t-shirts decided to wear it during any environmental event. We acknowledged the Rufford Foundation for providing us funding.