

A COMMUNITY BASED PROJECT IN THE MAROMIZAHA FOREST (MADAGASCAR).

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A NATURAL HERITAGE

The primary forest of Maromizaha (150 km East of Antananarivo and only 20 km from the National Park of Andasibe-Mantadia) represents an important link between the last remaining rainforests in the North and in the South.

It extends from 800 to 1200 m.s.l. and harbours a unique community of highland and lowland species: 13 lemur species, 77 bird species, 60 amphibian and 20 reptilian species have been discovered so far. Just to name a few, in Maromizaha you can find *Eliurus webbi* (Rodentia), *Gymnuromys roberti* (Rodentia),

Microgale longicaudata (Insectivora), *Oryzorictes hova* (Insectivora) and, among lemurs, *Indri indri*, *Propithecus diadema diadema*, *Avahi laniger*, *Varecia variegata editorum*, *Eulemur rubriventer*, *Eulemur fulvus*, *Haplemur griseus*, *Cheirogaleus major*, *Microcebus rufus*, *Allocebus trichotis*, *Lepilemur microdon*.

Future surveys will investigate the presence of *Prolemur simus*, recently rediscovered in the region, and *Daubentonia madascariensis*, as well as the most impressive carnivore, the fossa (*Cryptoprocta ferox*).



THE RESEARCH CENTER

This action, now with financial support of the European Community (Project BIRD: Biodiversity Integration and Rural Development N° FED/2009/217077), identifies as main problem to be addressed the limited training opportunities in the field of sustainable biodiversity management and conservation. Parco Natura Viva - Garda Zoological Park and partners built a research centre at Maromizaha forest. Structures and services will promote training of research and tourist guides, the development of local educational activities, field guide preparation and audiovisual material collection with the direct involvement of the six local communities. These materials will then be available for sale to tourists and researchers themselves.

The centre will also work a multi-purpose centre, serving as a centre dedicated to work with people to fight poverty and increase non-villagers community income. Using the centre as a pivotal point of our activities, we are carrying out analyses of the local policies and will then provide advice and policy-making support. We will help the communities to design and manage integrated development programs and help to ensure that project frameworks address the economic, social and environmental concerns of the local situation. The work in progress will contribute to local poverty reduction by encouraging researchers attendance and educational ecotourism together with facilitating the dissemination of innovative policies in sustainable agriculture and post-harvest management.



POVERTY REDUCTION AND CONSERVATION



Maromizaha forest was recognised as a protected area in 2001 and GERP, a Malagasy association of researchers on conservation of biodiversity was designated as managing authority.

Made clear that conservation requires the co-operation of a wide range of institutions and individuals, it is sure that a key role in conservation is played by local population, whose sustainable economic development is directly proportional to the increase of probability in species survival.

A valuable approach to conservation in Madagascar must involve actors who strive to achieve the multiple benefits of local communities to conserve essential resources

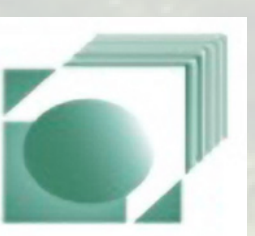
and strengthen the role of biodiversity in providing sustainable livelihoods.

Parco Natura Viva - Garda Zoological Park (Verona, Italy) and the University of Turin (Italy) in collaboration with GERP (Groupe d'Etude et Recherche sur les Primates de Madagascar), the European Community, Unolus and others partners, are promoting several activities at the primary forest of Maromizaha, in particular, education of malagasy students and communities, field research for biodiversity monitoring and rural development for the definition of new conservation policies by integrating conservation of Madagascar's extraordinary fauna and flora with local poverty reduction.

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Partners



Associates



EDUCATION

Schools are a natural place for education and a major step in education for conservation of biodiversity. The scholar community of Anevoka, a little village near Maromizaha, play a fundamental role in the conservation perspective and in the sustainable development of the eastern region of Madagascar. Parco Natura Viva - Garda Zoological Park, the University of Turin and Unolus support the school of Anevoka by building a new class for the 266 students and providing salary for malagasy teachers, but further financial supports are required to improve their structures and to purchase necessary scholar materials, textbooks and office

supplies. The English teacher Jean Guyot Betoto wrote us: "...To start, I would like to tell you that I really like the activities of teaching at Anevoka for many reasons. ... If they go on making efforts as they are doing now, I can tell you that I will be very proud at the end of my teaching over there. The number of learners increases every Saturday. As long as they are eager to attend my courses, I accept them as some of them come from remote villages. Everything is proceeding on the way we expect them to do. Thanks again for everything you do for me and my fellow Malagasy people". Guyot

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