

Project Update: February 2019

Activity 1: Local community training

Seventeen people, 15 men and 2 women, from the villages surrounding the forest of Andilambologno were trained for a lemur survey and forest patrol from 10th to 15th June 2018. The training included 4 days of theoretical training and 1 day of practical training. During theoretical training, participants learnt methodology of lemur survey and forest patrol. They also learnt use of equipment such as GPS and filling in a data sheet. A primatologist provided the training. The practical training consisted of the visit of the forest during which the participants collected data by using the GPS and filling a data sheet. We provided a test at the end of the training at the day 6 in order to evaluate the participants' ability to become guides. Only three of them failed the test. Overall the training went well and the participants were happy getting lemur knowledge.



Left: During the theoretical training. Right: Explanation about the use of a GPS.



Training Practice within the forest.

Activity 2: Lemur survey and forest patrol

From July 2018 to now, eight guides are now collecting lemur data permanently and conducting forest patrols. The local guides work in a groups of two and in a rotational schedule. One group works from 07:00am until 12:00 and another group from 12:00 until 16:30. The local guides follow the blue-eyed black lemur and the western lesser bamboo lemur species. It is noted that these two species are still wild as thus it was a bit difficult to habituate the group at the beginning of the survey. During the forest patrols, the local guides record any anthropogenic activity within the forest and destroy any lemur traps they find.

During the survey the guides revealed that the following lemur species occur within the forest: the blue-eyed black lemur (*Eulemur flaviformis*), the western lesser bamboo lemur (*Haplemur occidentalis*) and the northern giant mouse lemur (*Mirza zaza*). A freshwater turtle is also present within the forest.



Lemur survey

Activity 3: Community Outreach

During the celebration of the World Environment Day on 20th June 2018 in Marovato sud and we conducted awareness raising within the village of Mahitsihazo on 22nd June 2018. During the event, we organised an environmental quiz for the children. The children enjoyed the quiz and very active responding the questions related to the lemur protection. We also broadcast a film documentary about forest protection and lemur conservation. About 500 persons composed of pupils and villagers attended this event.



Left: Carnival surrounding the village. Right: Traditional song by the teachers.



Left: Film documentary projection. Right: Environnemental quiz.

Activity 4: Habitat restoration

On 29th January 2019 we carried out reforestation around the village of Mahitsihazo and within the forest. Three plant species, two native and one exotic tree, were planted. About 90 people participated to the reforestation. The majority of the participants were school children (60%) and approximately 1500 young seedlings were planted. We provided refreshment for the participants after the reforestation as acknowledgment. The school children really enjoyed the reforestation.



Left: Young seedling in October 2018. Right: Young seedling in December 2018.



Left: Transportation of the young seedling. Right: Young seedling.



Left: Explanation about the reforestation. Right: Children planted a tree.



Left: A tree planted (native tree). Right: A tree planted (exotic tree).



Left: Refreshment (distribution of juice). Right: Refreshment (distribution of biscuits).