
2023 Annual Report



For the protection of the Greater Bamboo Lemur

Our vision

To find a lasting balance between the needs of the lemurs and those of the local communities around them.

Our values

To listen, understand and act while respecting Malagasy tradition and culture.

To support the populations in their efforts in favor of sustainable development.

To provide the lemurs a future in an appropriate habitat.

HELPSIMUS was established in November 2009. Its mission is to protect the Greater Bamboo lemur (*Prolemur Simus*) in Madagascar through the Bamboo Lemur Programme, which combines scientific monitoring of the species, protecting its habitat, supporting the development of nearby villages, and funding the education of local children.

The Greater Bamboo lemur is one of the most threatened lemurs of Madagascar. It used to live widely all over the island, but now it is only found in the humid forests of the East where slightly more than a thousand individuals have been recorded.

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The Director's Message

In 2023, we reached the threshold of 700 lemurs monitored by our teams and who thus benefit from Helpsimus' direct protection. Those lemurs are divided into 31 groups and 4 different species.

Births were recorded in almost all of those groups, including over 80 births in the Greater Bamboo lemurs group. This is the second time we have reached this record level!

Despite the increasing challenges encountered, our holistic approach of conservation has worked well and has shown positive results.

However, the balance remains fragile in the face of climate events, inflation, deterioration of the track etc... It is thus essential to increase our support to local communities to avoid their further precariousness, which would have disastrous consequences for biodiversity.

Another significant success of the year, which arose directly from this approach, was the exceptional number of pupils who completed the primary cycle. This is directly related to our support to the schools, and in particular to school canteens.

Our research programme also took an important turn this year, with the building of our research center and the carrying out of a major study on dogs and their impact on the Greater Bamboo lemurs.

In addition, we acquired a land of 40 hectares where some Greater Bamboo

lemurs had spread their territory, thus ensuring better protection for them.

Our forest restoration programme was accelerated with the planting of almost 32000 saplings species, i.e. four times as much as the preceding year.

"Despite the increasing challenges encountered our holistic approach of conservation has worked well and has shown positive results."

However, despite our awareness-raising campaigns and our support to local communities, we still have some difficulties in stemming unauthorized cutting and clearing, in particular around the village of Vohitrarivo.

Yet, the process we have initiated with our local partner IMPACT Madagascar in order to create a protected area will contribute to securing the future of all our actions carried out over the last fifteen years.

Finally, we have made some changes to our organization, including creating an employment position in France and reinforcing the links with IMPACT Madagascar with whom we coordinate almost all of our activities, in order to improve our efficiency.

The year 2024 will be marked by an important anniversary, given that we will celebrate the 15 years for Helpsimus. It will be both a moment of reflection regarding our past achievements and a turning point for our future actions.

We warmly thank all our partners for their precious support. We are proud



to continue to protect our animals and their habitat in association with the local communities, despite the challenges encountered.

Delphine Rouillet

Key dates

2023

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2023 |

Construction of the Research Center
It hosts the students and volunteers of the programme who carry out research on the lemurs present on site and, on the issues related to the activities of the Bamboo Lemur Programme.

2022 |

The Simus School opens
The Simus School hosts the children from the partner villages of the Bamboo Lemur Programme. Environmental education activities are organized there.

2021 |

3 new school canteens open
The 5 schools in the programme now have a school canteen. Over 600 children and their teachers benefit from these canteens.

2020 |

The 3rd VOI is created
The 3 VOI includes over 900 ha of forest areas planted/converted to conservation and restoration zones (protection of the lemurs' habitat).

2019 |

Helpsimus starts the paddy field protection programme
This is to find lasting solutions for protecting crops from attacks by the Greater Bamboo lemurs and hence to reduce conflicts.

2018 |

Helpsimus confirms the presence of Ring-tailed mongoose
Inventories show the presence of rich and varied flora and fauna on the programme's site.

2017 |

Helpsimus identifies 4 new species of lemurs within the area it studies
The programme site is host to at least 5 different species in addition to the Greater Bamboo lemurs.

2016 |

Helpsimus becomes the supporting organization for the creation of the 3 VOI planned for the site of the Bamboo Lemur Programme
The Miradia VOI is the first to be created. It covers the territory of 6 of the 11 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

2015 |

Helpsimus organizes the 3rd International Technical Workshop on the Greater Bamboo lemur
The population of the species is re-assessed at 1000 individuals in the wild, ¼ of which are directly protected by Helpsimus.

2012 |

The Greater Bamboo lemur is removed from the list of the 25 most threatened primates in the world.
Scientific monitoring of the groups started this year.

2010 |

Funding of the "Bamboo Lemur" programme starts
Identification of the various groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs starts as well as recording of births.

2009 |

Foundation of the French Association for the Protection of the Greater Bamboo Lemur, called "Helpsimus"
Partners need to be found to finance the first activities onsite.



HELPSIMUS

Helpsimus is based close to the National Park of Ranomafana but in an unprotected zone, located at the heart of the agricultural land of several villages inhabited by the largest wild population of Greater Bamboo lemurs (almost 600 specimens of an overall total between 1200 and 1500 individuals).

"The aim of our Bamboo Lemur Programme is to find a balance between the needs of humans and those of the lemurs, so the local communities and wild fauna can cohabit in harmony."

To achieve this aim, we have developed a strategy consisting of:

1. Protecting the lemurs' habitat (thanks especially to the creation of the VOI¹).
2. Giving the local communities sufficient resources to protect the lemurs' habitat. This consists in improving the standard of living of the local population by supporting the security of the products from their harvests and increasing yield and by developing new Revenue Generating Activities.
3. Supporting the children's education.

The Greater Bamboo lemurs' habitat, comprised mostly of bamboo forests on which they feed almost exclusively, is badly damaged by "tavy" (slash-and-burn agriculture). We are therefore implementing a certain number of conservation activities to ensure the long-term survival of this species.

These are based around 3 main components:

- **Environmental component**

We identify the priority conservation areas on the programme site, improving knowledge about the eco-ethology of the species and working on resolving human/lemur conflicts.

¹ Village association to which the forestry administration transfers management of the natural resources located on its lands.

- **Socio-Economic component**

We are improving the standard of living of the local populations by helping to secure the produce from their harvests and improving yields, developing new Revenue Generating Activities, building infrastructure and means of communication, and implementing better hygiene practices to improve the health of the communities.

- **Education component**

We are improving awareness among local communities and we are facilitating access to education for the children from villages located in the fokontany involved in the programme.



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The Bamboo Lemur Programme

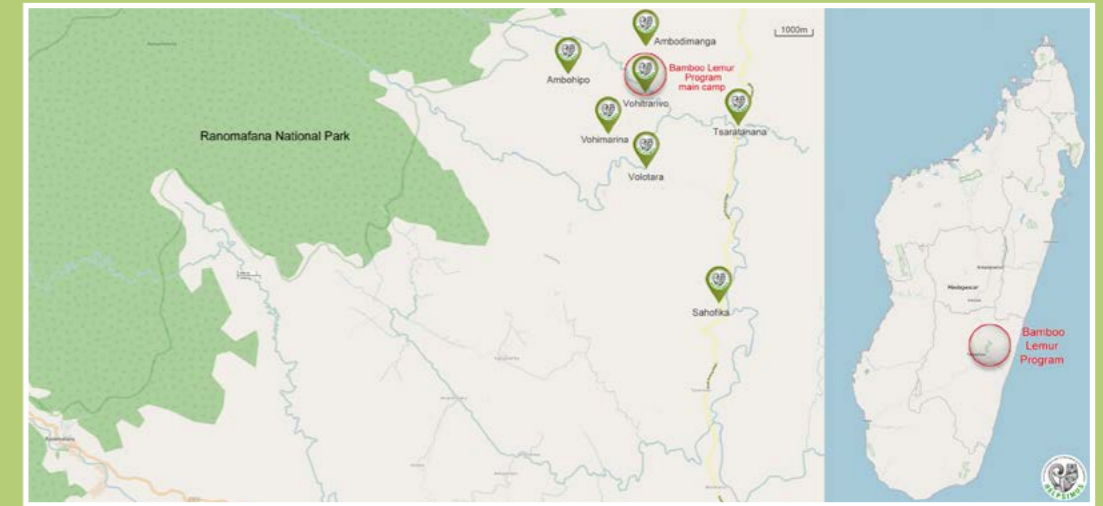
2023

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Location

390 km south-east of Antananarivo, 4 km from the National Park of Ranomafana, in the rural area of Tsaratanana, in the province of Fianarantsoa.

The conservation activities are concentrated on the land of the fokontany of Vohitrarivo, Sahofika, Ambodimanga, Ambodigoavy and Ambohipo.



The Bamboo Lemur Programme is a quadripartite project.

It brings together **local Malagasy stakeholders** (villagers, agents of the National Park of Ranomafana, the NGO IMPACT Madagascar) and **Helpsimus** who define the list of priority actions together.



Ranomafana National Park

Bamboo forests located on the agricultural land of several villages and in which the lemurs live

Paddy fields

© S. Meys



THE FOKONTANY

The Bamboo Lemur Programme works with 5 fokontany.

This is the smallest administrative unit in Madagascar that generally groups together several villages. We also work with the Municipality of Tsaratanana which controls these 5 fokontany.

Fokontany of Vohitrarivo



The programme's main camp, around 10 minutes' walk from the village. The territory of 8 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

Fokontany of Sahofika



The most isolated village which hosts our secondary camp. Territory of 5 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

Fokontany of Ambodigoavy



Third Helpsimus camp and territory of 6 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

Fokontany of Ambodimanga



Territory of 2 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

Fokontany of Ambohipo



Territory of Group II.

© F. Perroux, D. Roullet

The villagers

The villagers are farmworkers who grow mainly rice, sugar cane, potatoes, manioc, coffee, beans.

They are extremely poor and entirely dependent on their land where the Greater Bamboo lemurs live. They use bamboo daily as a construction material.





Environmental Component

- Identifying the priority conservation areas and finding a balance between the needs of the lemurs and those of the local communities, while improving knowledge about the ecoethology of the species and by working on resolving conflicts between humans and the lemurs. -



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENT

At the end of 2023 the site of the Bamboo Lemur Programme hosted a population of about 660 Greater Bamboo lemurs divided into 21 groups.

A team comprising 28 individuals today monitors the 21 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs, the breakdown of which is detailed below:



Young Greater Bamboo lemur © F. Perroux

Location	Group	Number of individuals (dec. 2023)	Comments
VOHITRARIVO	1	65 (11 newborns)	Group 1 separates into 2 or 3 sub-groups (1C + 1D to be confirmed).
	1' = 1A	30 (3 newborns)	
	1'' = 1B	23 (3 newborns)	
	1''' = 1AA	19 (3 newborns)	From group 1''.
	2	35 (8 newborns)	
	2' = 2A	41 (5 newborns)	
	2'' = 2B	28 (6 newborns)	
	3	45 (3 newborns)	Group 4 is dividing into 2 sub-groups.
	4	35 (3 newborns)	
4' = 4A	20 (1 newborn)		
SAHOFIKA	5	74 (4 newborns)	Group 5 separates into 3 sub-groups (of which one is regularly observed at the school reserve (5A?)).
	6	> 80 (10 newborns)	The group separates into 2 or 3 sub-groups (6A + 6B to be confirmed). The animals are dispersed, difficult to count.
	7	36 (4 newborns)	
VOLOTARA	7'	34 (2 newborns)	
	8	38 (6 newborns)	Only groups 8,9, 9' are monitored by the guides.
	8' = 8A	?	
	8'' = 8B	?	
	9	34 (5 newborns)	
	9' = 9A	22 (5 newborns)	
10	?		
TOTAL	21	≥ 660 (82 newborns)	Imprecise counting of group 6.

We have changed the names of the groups by replacing apostrophes by letters to facilitate the writing and also to better follow the various fissions. Thus group 1A was formed on the basis of individuals from Group 1 and Group 1AA on the basis of Group 1A.

82 births were recorded in the 21 groups monitored by our teams. A record level for the second time of our history! The population of Greater Bamboo lemurs monitored and protected by Helpsimus now exceeds 660 individuals.

Several groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs separate into 2 or 3 sub-groups which we have started to name such as "1C" or "6A" for instance, and which may now be separate groups.

The Greater Bamboo lemurs

Previously, a team of guides was comprised of 2 persons in charge of monitoring one sole group of Greater Bamboo lemurs. It is no longer the case, given that now a team is often in charge of monitoring several groups which were formed on the occasion of successive fissions (such as Groups 1, 1C and 1D). This makes the work of the guides more difficult, in particular where the animals are quite dispersed. It is the case of Group 6 for which it has proved difficult to achieve accurate counting for several months.

The team of guides will have to be reinforced in 2024, in particular in Sahofika for Groups 6 (+ 6A and 6B), 7 and 7A. The increase in the number of groups can be explained by the increase of the population of Greater Bamboo lemurs and by the impact of the cyclones of 2022. As a reminder, the latter caused an important dispersion of the animals, especially in Vohitrarivo. Thus, the average size of the groups fell from slightly over 40 individuals before the cyclones to 25 individuals after the cyclones. With the births of 2023, each group is currently comprised of slightly over 30 individuals.

The identification of the individuals of Group 2 started again in 2023 with the assistance of 3 volunteers, including 2 keepers

who managed to identify 17 individuals out of the 20 adults forming the group. 4 out of those 17 individuals had already been identified before the Covid epidemic. Some of them were observed again as from 2021 or appeared regularly in the photos of the guides, such as Avotra, a male observed for the first time within the group in 2014.



Avotra © D. Rouillet

The two females Faneva and Justine were observed in 2017 and 2019 respectively. They both gave birth to a newborn in October. Some information on their reproduction over the last few years:

Year	Faneva	Justine
2017	1 newborn	-
2018	1 newborn	-
2019	1 newborn	1 newborn
2020	?	?
2021	?	1 newborn
2022	?	no newborn
2023	1 newborn	1 newborn

Group 2 remains one of the most productive of the population. After the cyclones of 2022, the number of individuals of Group 2

had fallen to 20. In two breeding seasons only, the group almost doubled: to date it is comprised of 35 individuals, including 8 newborns in 2023.



Faneva © Léa Diogo



Justine © Léa Diogo



Identification of Group 2 © D. Rouillet



THE OTHER LEMURS ON THE SITE

The table below provides details about the other groups of lemurs monitored by Helpsimus:

December 2023				
Species	Nb of groups monitored	Nb of individuals	Nb of guides	Comments
Red-bellied lemurs	5	23 (5 newborns)	5	+ 1 group of 4 on the territory of Group 6
Ranomafana Bamboo lemurs	2	15 (3 newborns)	2	+ 1 group of 5 on the territory of Group 6 + 1 group of 5 on the territory of Group 9A + 1 group of at least 3 in a community reforestation area, discovered in 2023 + a group of 4 in the new land, discovered in 2023
Peyrieras' Woolly lemurs	3	10 (2 newborns)	3	
TOTAL	10	48	10	

In total, 31 groups of 4 species of lemurs are monitored. Hence over 700 lemurs are directly protected by Helpsimus.

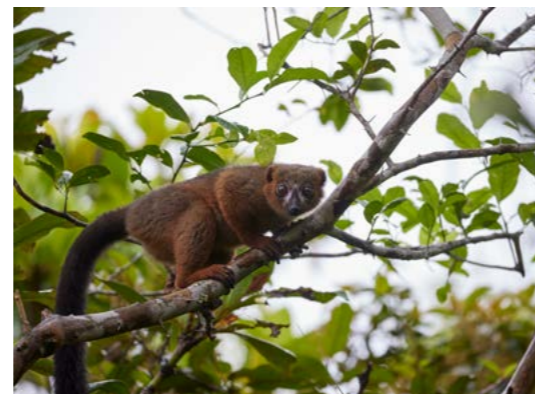
The monitoring of Red-bellied lemurs showed various significant changes in 2 groups:

- **Group of the Sahofika School Reserve:** after the disappearance of the adult female in April, the adult male stayed with his two daughters of 2021 and 2022. He is no longer present in the Reserve, yet a young male appeared alongside the female who was born in 2021. The young female of 2022 has been excluded by the newcomer, and despite intensive monitoring involving about ten persons to find her, she disappeared a few weeks after

the couple got together.

- **Group of Ankolona (Sahofika) :** the subadult female of 2020 left the group shortly before the birth season. The group is now comprised of 5 individuals, including a young individual born in 2023. In addition, the two volunteer keepers have prepared identification sheets of the individuals of those two groups.

We have identified a newborn in each of the Peyrieras' Woolly lemur of Volotara group (6 individuals) and of Vohitrarivo (4 individuals). We also managed to collect droppings which will soon be confirmed by genetic analyses.



Red-bellied lemur © S. Meys



Peyrieras' Woolly lemurs © D. Rouillet

The other animal species

The inventory of fauna started in 2017 and accelerated in 2018 with the use of camera traps.

Groups	Number of species	Comments
Amphibians	23 including <i>Mantidactylus ambony</i> , a newly described species (Scherz et col., 2020)	According to a preliminary inventory completed in the Miaradia VOI (Nov-Dec 2020).
Reptiles	15 + 2 (2023)	According to a preliminary inventory completed in the Miaradia VOI (Nov-Dec 2020). The observations of <i>Uroplatus</i> are increasingly common in the forest fragment of Ankolona. We do not know if this is the result of their increase in number or a better ability on the part of our guides to identify them. In any event, at least two species seem to be present, including <i>Uroplatus fimbriatus</i> , the second is being identified.
Birds	> 50	The presence of several new species of birds was confirmed In 2023, including the Velvet Asity (<i>Philepitta castanea</i>), the Cuckoo Roller (<i>Leptosomus discolor</i>) and the Tylas Vanga (<i>Tylas eduardi</i>). The inventory is being updated. Yet, we can already state that the Bamboo Lemur Programme site is comprised of 50 species of birds. Monitoring of the Madagascar Long-eared owl (<i>Asio madagascariensis</i>) started in 2019.
Mammals (except lemurs)	At least a dozen of species	Monitoring of the Ring-tailed mongoose (<i>Galidia elegans</i>) started in 2018.

In 2023, the monitoring of the Ring-tailed mongoose took a new turn. Following a series of direct observations of a pair in the School Reserve in Sahofika, we put in place daily monitoring of those animals with a two-fold goal:

- Facilitate direct observations of the species without disturbing the animals;
- Supplement the data collected by our camera traps.

After all, the idea is to initiate the same monitoring as that of the lemurs.

Frédéric, the guide in charge of this monitoring, also uses 4 camera traps. He checks them every day, by examining directly the images recorded in order to determine if a new video of mongoose is recorded. Even though direct observations remain infrequent, Frédéric identified various places where camera traps regularly record videos.

Those direct observations, which only last a few seconds, were made in February and June. During one of those direct observations, Frédéric saw a mongoose who



Frédéric taking a GPS position © D. Rouillet

was eating at 4 meters height. Most of the observations at a height were made thanks to direct observations rather than camera traps, despite various attempts to place camera traps in the trees. They suggest that mongoose hunt at a height. Such a monitoring is difficult to achieve, yet the



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENT

results are rather encouraging. Thus, other data are collected by Frédéric, and they supplement the previous studies: home range, rhythm of activity etc...



Mongoose © Helpsimus

The guides

The team of guides comprises 38 individuals from the villages of Vohitrarivo, Vohimarina, Ambohipo, Ambodimanga, Volotara, Ambodigoavy and Sahofika.

Their duties are defined as follows:

- monitoring the groups: locating the animals and determining their territory (using GPS), counting them (regularly updating the inventories), recording threats (presence of dogs or traps) and raids by the lemurs on crops;
- fending off lemurs from the crops;
- accompanying the scientific teams and eco-volunteers;
- participating in inventories.

Like every year, the guides' uniforms have been updated (t-shirts, trousers, sandals, boots,

jackets, rainwear, backpacks, and watches).



Part of the team of guides from Volotara © S. Meys



Part of the team of guides from Sahofika © S. Meys

Guarding the Paddy Fields

We introduced guarding of the paddy fields to prevent raids by Greater Bamboo lemurs in paddy fields with rice grains ripening, until the harvest.

The two annual rice harvests are guarded:

- the "off-season" harvest which runs from October to January-February,
- the "high season" harvest which runs from March-April to June. This is the most important of the year, when all the paddy fields are cultivated.

In addition to this surveillance, the areas around the paddy fields are

cleared in order to improve visibility for the guards and footbridges are also installed along the lemurs' paths.



Guarding paddy fields © IMPACT Madagascar



Clearing of perimeter and bridge © IMPACT Madagascar

The team of guards is now composed of 152 individuals who are managed by an agent from IMPACT Madagascar paid by Helpsimus.

The guards received the following equipment: raincoats, boots, torches, watches, backpacks, pens, monitoring sheets and folders.

Height new footbridges were built, so that there are now 11

Land acquisition

2023
ANNUAL REPORT



The 40 ha parcel in blue on the map © S. Meys

In the sector of the VOI Miaradia, Greater Bamboo lemurs have spread their territory on a private land outside the limits of the area of activity of the village associations.

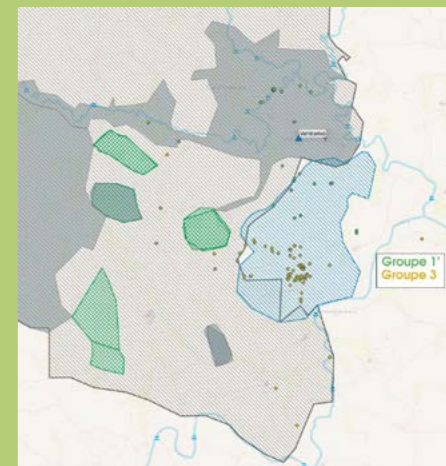
We acquired this parcel of 40 hectares with our partner IMPACT Madagascar in order to secure those new territories where the Greater Bamboo lemurs now stay. The acquisition was finalized in 2023, faster than expected given the imminent threat of a project to plant eucalyptus.

The demarcation of the parcel is now finished. The administrative steps to obtain the final title deed need to be finalized. The title deed will be owned by the Malagasy NGO IMPACT Madagascar, partner of Helpsimus in Madagascar since 2014. Helpsimus and IMPACT Madagascar signed a joint-management agreement regarding the parcel.

The management plan is in line with the aims of the Bamboo Lemur Programme developed by Helpsimus. The parcel thus becomes the 4th sector of our area of activity, it being specified that the first three correspond to the limits of the 3 VOI.

Preliminary inventories have already been made this year. Bamboo is very abundant there, like in the sector of the Miaradia VOI where forests are most deteriorated compared to the two other sectors, those of Samivar VOI and Manirisoa VOI. However, a forest fragment was identified where a large number of saplings shows that the forest is regenerating.

The preliminary fauna inventory confirmed the use of the parcel by the Group 3 of Greater Bamboo lemurs, comprised of 45 individuals, and the presence of Ranomafana Bamboo lemurs. In addition, the GPS data collected by the guides show that Group 1A also stays in the parcel. Last, various species of birds whose presence had not been confirmed to date, have been observed during the inventory.



Use of the parcel by the Groups 1A and 3 © S. Meys



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENT

Environmental component

footbridges. A total of 19 areas is watched by guards who work in teams of 4, with a week of work followed by a week off.



Guarding © IMPACT Madagascar

fields covering this time a total area of 34 hectares. During that campaign, guarding benefited 187 rice growers.



Guards meeting © IMPACT Madagascar

Off-season campaign:

From November 2022 to February 2023, the guards watched over 700 paddy fields, thus covering a total area of 25 hectares.

Guarding has benefited 191 rice growers, i.e. a 60 increase of beneficiaries compared to the high season campaign 2022. 1116 attacks were put off, i.e. a 167.6% increase compared to the previous campaign.

122 attacks that caused damage in 40 paddy fields were recorded: in 94,3% of the cases, the damage is lower than 1% whereas in 5,7% of the cases, it ranges from 1 to 5%.

96% (+2%) of the beneficiaries are quite satisfied with the system implemented.

High-season campaign:

From April to June 2023, the guards watched over 1200 paddy

Over 1000 attacks were put off, i.e. approximately the same number as in the previous campaign. However, only 40 attacks caused damage in 27 paddy fields were recorded: in 85% of the cases, the damage is less than 0,1%. In the most impacted paddy fields, the damage was limited to up to 2%, showing a significant improvement compared to the previous campaign where the maximum threshold was 5%.



Greater Bamboo lemurs using a footbridge © Helpsimus

Over 95% of the beneficiaries are quite satisfied with the system implemented.

Guarding of paddy fields then

resumed on 6 November 2023.

Arranging for protecting the paddy fields from the lemurs is essential to ensure sustainability of the conservation work we have started and to involve local communities in protecting Greater Bamboo lemurs on a long-lasting basis. Last, involving directly the affected communicates in resolving conflicts create job opportunities and additional income for local communities.

The VOI

As a project coordinator, Helpsimus became the supporting organization for the creation of each VOI (*village association to which the forest administration transfer the management of the natural resources present on its lands*) with the assistance of the NGO IMPACT Madagascar.

As a reminder, the creation of these VOI is a vital step of the Bamboo Lemur Programme. It provides a first level of protection, not only for the Greater Bamboo lemurs but also and above all for their habitat. The VOI also give responsibility to the villagers and consolidate their commitment to protecting the lemurs.

Three VOI are required to cover Helpsimus's area of activity which covers an area of almost 3800 ha.

The first VOI was created in 2016: the MIARADIA VOI, which covers the territory (or some of the territory) of 11 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

The second VOI was created in 2018. It is the SAMIVAR VOI. It covers the territory of 6 other groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

The third VOI was made official in 2020. It is the MANIRISOA VOI which covers the territory of the last 6 groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs.

Helpsimus also supports the Management Action Plans (MAP, which set out the long-term goals of the VOI) and the Annual Work Plans (AWP which specify the practical actions to be carried out each year to implement the MAP) of the VOI.

A new assessment of the three VOI started in 2023 and will continue until 2024. It allows for assessing the status of the Management Action Plans, which is quite positive, as well as the status of the Annual Work Plans of the VOI, whose development requires a few improvements. This assessment should lead to the renewal of the management agreements and to possible changes to the Management Action Plans.

Towards the creation of a class 5 protected area

A class 5 protected area is defined as a natural resource management area where the aims to preserve biodiversity are combined with sustainable economic and social activities, while enabling local communities to participate in managing those resources. It is precisely the goal of the Bamboo Lemur Program!

We have thus initiated the process of creating a class 5 protected area which is aimed at integrating the three VOI and the private land, thus allowing for guaranteeing the long-term future of the work carried out since 2008 on the site of the Bamboo Lemur Programme. The protected area would involve all the local communities, and not only the members of the VOI. It would allow for guaranteeing long term protection of Greater Bamboo lemurs, their habitat and the other animal species present, while promoting the socio-economic development of local communities.

The steps that have been already been taken this year are the following:

- Preliminary discussions have been initiated with the Direction Générale de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (DREDD) (Directorate General for Environment and

- Sustainable Development)
- Consultations have been initiated with Madagascar National Park - Ranomafana.
- The development of an expression of interest regarding the intention to participate in the process of creation of a protected area has been initiated. This expression of interest will be shortly submitted to the DREDD.



THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

New infrastructure and ongoing studies

New infrastructures

We have built a new camp in Vohitrarivo, on the land acquired by IMPACT Madagascar (see p. 19).



Drone view of the new camp © S. Meys

We have also built a Research Center close to this new camp which we called "Simus Research Center".



The Research Center © D. Roullet



The Research Center © D. Roullet

It is comprised of several spaces: a large working room and meeting room, a storage room and a small office.



The Research Center © D. Roullet



The Research Center © D. Roullet



The Research Center © D. Roullet

The biologists, students and volunteers will now benefit from considerably improved working conditions.

The Center is also aimed at hosting training events and educational workshops.

It was decorated by Christian Menabe, a Malagasy artist with whom we have worked for a long time.



Tribute to Bettina Sallé, painting from Menabe © D. Roullet



Painting from Menabe © D. Roullet



The Research Center © M. André

Study on Mouse and Dwarf lemurs

A first series of samples of hair and droppings of Mouse lemurs, and possibly of Dwarf lemurs is ready for genetic analyses.

A new nest has been placed next to a hollow trunk which is regularly used by Cheirogalus during their nighttime rest. If the Cheirogalus use the nesting box, we will be able to collect the hair (or droppings) more easily compared to the tree, without having to catch the animals.

Study of the impact of cyclones on Greater Bamboo lemurs' food.

Students from the Bangor University, in the United Kingdom, have analyzed data collected by our guides (in particular regarding food) before and after the cyclones of February 2022 to assess their impact on Greater Bamboo lemurs.

Study of the rhythm of activity of mongoose

A French student in Master of applied Ethology at the Université Sorbonne Paris Nord has analyzed the videos on mongoose collected in 2022 in Sahofika.

He has crossed check the rhythm of activity of mongoose with that of other small mammals and birds

in order to identify the potential preys of mongoose.

His study is aimed at assessing the food resources of mongoose by correlating their rhythm of activity with that of other animals of the Reserve.



Placing camera trap © D. Roullet

In addition, a volunteer (an ethologist) has analyzed the videos collected at the CERZA.

The goals are the following:

- establish an ethogram;
- determine the rhythm of activity of mongoose;
- determine the vertical distribution of animals.

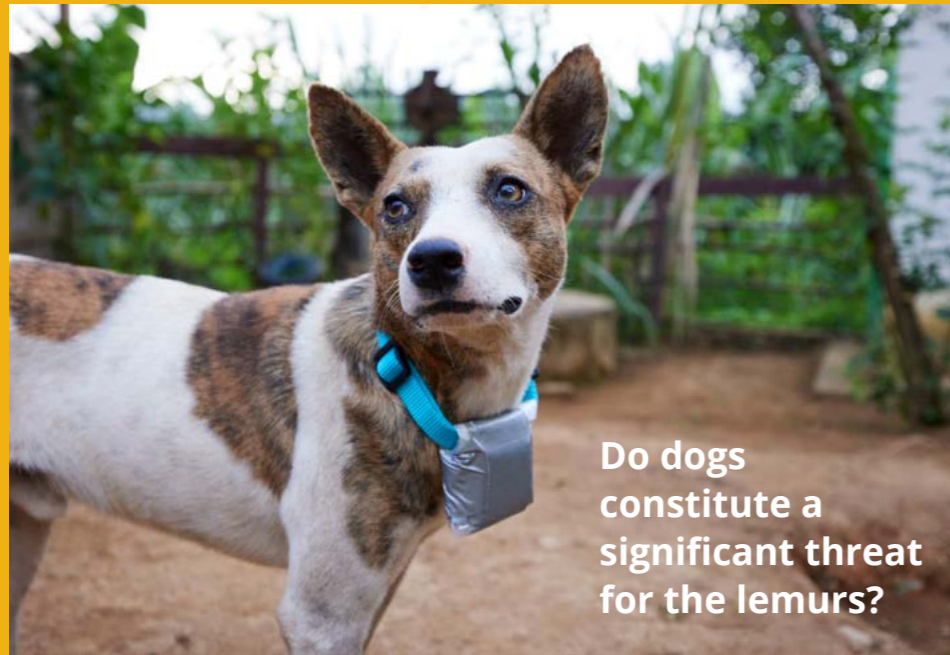
Publications are being drafted, the first one regarding the Peyrieras' Woolly lemurs and the second one regarding the Ring-tailed mongoose.



THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

2023

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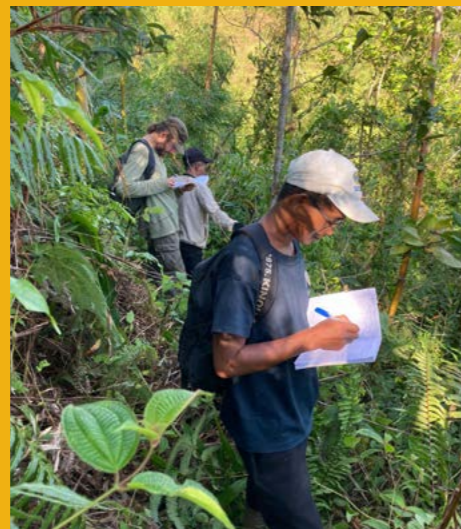


Do dogs constitute a significant threat for the lemurs?

In April we launched a study aiming at assessing whether or not the regular presence of dogs on the territory of various groups of Greater Bamboo lemurs (Groups 1, 1A, 1B, 2, 2A, 2B, 3 and 4) constituted a significant threat for Greater Bamboo lemurs.

A significant threat means:

- The lemurs spend more time being careful and less time doing other things (such as resting and feeding);
- Reproduction is low;
- The number of lemurs is low and they move a lot;
- The lemurs are in poor physical condition and suffer from more diseases/parasites.



Observations in the forest © Helpsimus

This study was conducted by Tristan Niel, fifth year student at the Ecole Nationale Vétérinaire d'Alfort and in Master of Ethology

at the Université de Strasbourg, with the help of 2 Malagasy research assistants (IMPACT Madagascar).

The observations have focused around Group 2, the most impacted by the presence of dogs.

The results obtained are used as a reference for the other groups.



Dog equipped with a GPS collar © T. Niel

It is obvious that the lemurs run away and disperse in the presence of dogs, yet only 2 attacks were observed during the study period (April-June).

In addition, the lemurs spend a lot of time on the ground (1/3 of the time) – at the same level as dogs. Therefore, the presence of dogs does not have any impact on the spatial distribution and in particular vertical distribution of lemurs.

70 to 80 births a year are recorded. The population of Greater Bamboo lemurs has increased since the start of the programme. Thus, it has nearly trebled since 2014.

Unlike dogs, the lemurs are in good physical condition and have few parasites. Moreover, the parasites present in the dogs'

Dogs in the forest. What are the consequences for the lemurs?

droppings are not the same as those found in the lemurs' droppings. Therefore, dogs do not transmit parasites to lemurs.

Last, dogs mostly stay at the periphery of lemurs' territory. The study thus showed that to date dogs do not represent a significant threat for the lemurs.

during a presentation at the Simus Research Center.

This gave an additional opportunity to raise awareness among the persons present by reminding them not to enter a forest with a dog. Tristan submitted his veterinary thesis in December with jury congratulations.



© Helpsimus



Dropping collection © Helpsimus



Discussion with dog owners © D. Roullet

Yet, the study was carried out outside of the tenrec hunting period, where dogs are used to locate them. This is the reason why we have supplemented Tristan's data in October, by placing again GPS collars on various dogs. The data are being analyzed.

The results of this study, which will be published, were shared with the members of the Miaradia VOI



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENT

The Patrols

Forest patrollers ensure that the members of the VOI comply with the rules in terms of clearing.

The team of patrollers consists of 51 people:

- 15 patrollers for the Miaradia VOI;
- 21 patrollers for the Samivar VOI;
- 15 patrollers hired for the Manirisoa VOI.

Patrols take place twice a month and their results are noted in a monitoring notebook. The patrollers are trained by our partner, IMPACT Madagascar which then verifies their work.

In 2023, 864 patrols were carried out.

	VOI MIARADIA	VOI SAMIVAR	VOI MANIRISOA
Nb of patrols	288 (8 days/month with 15 patrollers)	288 (8 days/month with 21 patrollers)	288 (8 days/month with 15 patrollers)
Area checked per month	641ha	1550 ha	405 ha
Number of unauthorized cutting	205	27	34
Number of unauthorized clearing	21	1	6

Whereas the number of cutting and clearing has decreased in the Samivar and Manirisoa VOI, it is not the case in Miaradia where they have increased, in particular during the second semester, despite the efforts to raise awareness. The Patrols will take place in 2024 in this sector.

Our area of activity covers about 3800 ha of which almost 934 ha are conservation and restoration areas. The VOI bring together 867 members (11.6% increase compared to 2022): this can be probably explained by the fact that aid, including aid distributed after the cyclones, are exclusively reserved to VOI members:

- 304 for the Miaradia VOI
- 297 for the Samivar VOI
- 266 for the Manirisoa VOI.

Forest restoration

The aims of the forest restoration programme are to:

- restore the most damaged parts of the forest fragments present on the site of the Bamboo Lemur Programme;
- create corridors between the forest fragments to ensure continuity of the lemurs' habitat.

The restoration areas represent almost 80% of the forests present on the site of the Bamboo Lemur Programme. By integrating last year the "Plant for the Planet" programme of the Fondation Yves Rocher, we increased our planting goals by scheduling the restoration of 60 hectares of forest over a period of five years.

In 2023, 31,931 saplings were planted, instead of the planned 400,000 saplings, despite a production of 46,759 plants in 2022.



Forest restoration © IMPACT Madagascar

We thus planted almost 70% of the plants produced in 2022. Those 31,931 plants allowed for restoring 8 hectares of forest instead of the 12 planned hectares. The plants' survival rate exceeds 80%.

Environmental component



Forest restoration © IMPACT Madagascar



Forest restoration © IMPACT Madagascar



Forest restoration © IMPACT Madagascar

The reasons for this result are many:

- We chose to further densify our planting to promote forest regeneration. Thus, we planted between 3500 and 4000 plants per hectare, thus slightly exceeding the initial previsions of 3300.
- As a result of bad weather, some plants died. Before replacing them, we waited for the new plants to be more robust.
- Some restoration areas are far from the nurseries, which complicates logistics.
- Last, we have not organized enough planting days with the communities to be able to plant all the planned plants, despite a participation that trebled compared to last year and a strong motivation on the part of participants, in particular women. However, it was the first time we had so many saplings to plant.

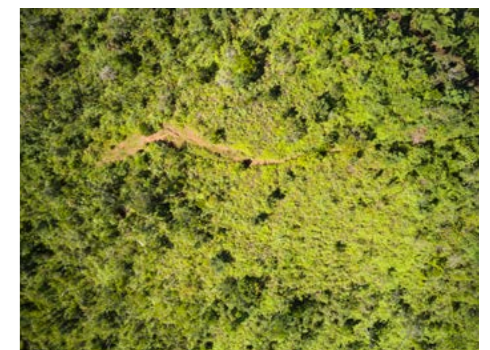
In 2024, we planned to increase the number of planting days to reach the defined goals. However, we managed to plant almost four times as many saplings as last year.



Tree nursery of Vohitrarivo © S. Meys



Tree nursery of Sahofika © S. Meys



Forest restoration area © S. Meys



Forest restoration area © D. Roulet

Education Component

- Developing activities to raise awareness among local communities and facilitate access to education for the children of the partner villages in the programme. -





EDUCATION COMPONENT

We work with 5 schools (Sahofika, Vohitrarivo, Ambodigoavy, Ambodimanga and Ambohipo) **located in the 5 fokontany involved in the project.**

Supporting schools and training teachers

Most of the 22 teachers of the 5 primary schools located in our area of activity do not have any higher education degree. 16 teachers were hired by parent of children and are paid partly by Helpsimus.

Thanks to the Fondation Air France support and with the assistance of our partner IMPACT Madagascar, we have implemented a plan for teacher training which relies on an assessment made in 2021.

The training started in April with personalized workshops in the 5 schools of the programme.



Training teachers © IMPACT Madagascar

The following subjects were broached: mathematics, French, life sciences and educational

methods. In September, the 22 teachers managed to attend a collective workshop aiming at assessing their acquired knowledge and filling the gaps.

We distributed almost 650 school kits this year. Each kit is comprised of two notebooks, four pens and one pencil. New this year was the addition of a photo of Greater Bamboo lemurs on the notebook cover.

We renovated the main building of the Sahofika school and replaced all the school furniture. We also launched, at the end of last year, the construction of a new building, in order to replace the last wood building which was in poor condition.



New school building in Sahofika © IMPACT Madagascar

Repaired work was made on the toilets of the Ambodimanga school to restore them.

Educational workshops

In 2023, we held 84 educational workshops, which corresponds to a 29% increase, compared

to 2022. Over 2100 children participated in those workshops. The main themes were the forest and the lemurs, together with workshops on hygiene, in particular hand cleaning and school cleaning.

A new educational workshop was created, where the children receive saplings to plant at their home and are in charge of watching their growth.



Children with their sapling © D. Rouillet

After taking the plants at the nursery, our educators explain to the children how to plant them and give them instructions to watch the development of their tree.



Planting a sapling © D. Rouillet

A small contest among children is planned to reward those who will

Education component

best take care of their sapling, thus proposing a recreational approach to learn how to protect their trees and the environment.

Outdoor classes

In 2023, we also organized 8 outdoor classes in the Simus School. The visits of the forest fragment of Ankolona enabled 90 children to observe Greater Bamboo lemurs (Group 5) as well as the Red-bellied lemurs monitored since 2017.



Visit of the forest fragment of Ankolona © S. Meys



Work session at the Simus School © S. Meys

Moreover, during the summer holidays, we organized a new outdoor class in the National Park of Ranomafana, with 15 children, who had all been awarded the primary school certificate.



Visit of the National Park of Ranomafana © Helpsimus



Visit of the National Park of Ranomafana © Helpsimus

We have improved the infrastructures of the Simus School by building a dormitory with 8 bunk beds. For some children, sleeping in a bed was a significant moment of the outdoor class given that it was the first time for several of them.

The Simus Festival

In Autumn, our educator Laurent focused on preparing the Simus Festival which took place on 28 October. Over a hundred of children from 5 schools participated in this event, presenting song and dance shows on the lemur topic. Laurent composed a song especially for this event, called « Are we going to protect the lemurs? ».

Sa chanson a été chantée par les enfants qui ont participé aux classes vertes. His song was sung by the children who participated in the outdoor classes.



Menabe painting a Greater Bamboo Lemur during the Simus Festival © D. Rouillet



Children dancing © D. Rouillet



Parade of the Bamboole Lemur Programme team © D. Rouillet



Awarding prizes to the football teams © D. Rouillet



EDUCATION COMPONENT

Visit of Florence Perroux

In April, Florence Perroux, scientific mediator of the Zoo de la Palmyre and Director of Palmyre Conservation, went to Sahofika to support the start of the Simus School, opened in December 2022.



Participants in an outdoor class of the Simus School © S. Meys



Monitoring assessments of children © S. Meys



Handing down educational material © S. Meys

She participated in two outdoor classes and worked with Laurent, our educator, and Ruva the supervisor of Laurent at IMPACT

Madagascar, to develop new activities, prepare Laurent's schedule and assess the needs in terms of material and educational media.

Nutricarte Workshops

We have extended the Nutricarte workshops to all of our partner villages. They had been previously organized solely for the school canteen cooks and teachers.



Nutricartes Workshop © IMPACT Madagascar

As a reminder, Nutricartes is a game on food created by the International Solidarity Association ("Appel") which has set up an entertaining learning method for teaching the fundamentals of nutrition. In 2023, 250 persons thus participated in those workshops who were, once again quite successful.

Mother-Daughter Workshops on Menstrual cycles and hygiene

In 2023, one hundred women and young women participated in the mother-daughter workshops on the menstrual cycle and related hygiene, i.e. almost three times as

much as in 2022.



Mother-daughter workshop © IMPACT Madagascar



Mother-daughter workshop © IMPACT Madagascar

Those workshops were organized in the three VOI in cooperation with our partner IMPACT Madagascar. The main objective of this mother-daughter workshop is to improve the health and quality of life of the women while contributing to the prevention of early pregnancies. These can in fact lead to many adolescent girls dropping out of school in our area of activity.

Those workshops will continue in 2024.

The School Canteens

School year 2022-2023

Following the cyclones in 2022, the 5 school canteens stayed open

Illustrated booklet "The Phantom of the forest"

We published our new illustrated booklet called "The Phantom of the forest".

It is about Mavo, a farmer from the Vohitrarivo village, who made an extraordinary discovery on his land: that of a group of Peyrieras' Woolly lemurs. With the assistance of Maryline, an Helpsimus volunteer, he becomes an experienced guide of the association and above all a protector of those little known nocturnal lemurs.

As the previous booklets, the story is in French and in Malagasy. As a matter of fact, they are used in Madagascar by our Simus School educators as well as our partner schools.



Almost 150 children have already had the opportunity to discover the booklet and they love it! Reading the booklet raises several questions, such as « where to the Woolly lemurs leave?» "Are they protected" and "Can we see them?".

The *Phantom of the forest* allows for raising awareness of those discrete animals and encourage children to act in order to protect them! This is the third booklet of the collection that we launched in 2019.

Part of the booklets is available for sale in France to fund the next one which will focus on Ranomafana Bamboo lemurs: <https://shop.helpsimus.org/>

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Mavo suit le chemin au pied de la grande colline de bambou. Au fond du vallon, il arrive près du bosquet d'arbres qui pousse au bord de sa rizière. Mavo reprend son souffle en regardant les étoiles qui scintillent à travers le feuillage. Tout à coup, deux énormes boules brillantes apparaissent ! C'est bizarre, Mavo n'a jamais vu d'étoiles aussi grosses dans le ciel... Il entend bouger les feuilles. Il sort sa lampe et éclaire les branches au-dessus de lui. Ce ne sont pas des étoiles mais deux grands yeux tout ronds qui l'observent ! Effrayé, il s'enfuit en courant.

Nandeha an-tongotra nanaraka ny lankely amin'ny havoana misy alam-bolo i Mavo. Rehefa tafidina tery an-dahasaha izy, dia tonga teo amin'ireo hazo maromaro manakaity ny tanimbary. Naka aina kely izy sady niery ireo kintana manjelatra eo anelanelan'ny ravin-kazo. Tampoka teo, ireo misy zavatra boribory mazava mipoitra ! Tena hafahafa, tsy mbola nanita kintana lehibe toy ireo izy tery amin'ny lanitra... In'any fa henany mihetsika ny navinkazo. Navoakany ny fanilo ary notsiloviny ny sampan-kazo teo amboniny. Tsy kintana lehibe kay ireo zavatra hitany ireo fa maso lehibe boribory anankina, izay miery azy. Natahotra izy ka nandositra sady nihazakazana.



Reading the illustrated booklet at the Simus School © Helpsimus



EDUCATION COMPONENT

throughout the school year. They reopened in October.



Cooks preparing vegetables © IMPACT Madagascar



Cooks serving the meals © IMPACT Madagascar



Children at the canteen © IMPACT Madagascar

During the 2022-2023 school year, they distributed nearly 90,000 meals to over 719 children and their 23 teachers and 14 cooks a day.

In the 5 primary schools supported by Helpsimus, over 70% candidates to the certificate of primary elementary studies (Certificat d'études primaires

élémentaires CEPE) passed their exam. This had never happened before! Moreover, the pupils who obtained the best results of the Commune is from the Vohitrarivo school.

We received a letter from Mrs. Razafinampendarivo, the Head of the Educational Administration Zone (Zone d'Administration Pédagogique ZAP) of Tsaratanana, thanking Helpsimus and our partner IMPACT Madagascar for their support.

Mrs. Razafinampendarivo also expressed her great proud for the exceptional results achieved throughout the school year.

Supplying canteens

The paddy fields present on the new land of 40 hectares continue to be operated by several rice growers. The latter will give 1/3 of their crops to supply the Vohitrarivo school canteen. The first crop is scheduled for early next year. The canteen operating budget should thus decrease.

In Vohitrarivo, various vegetable crop parcels near the schools contributed to supplying school canteens throughout the month of June.

The school canteens favor children's school attendance, which contributes to significantly improving their results. School

canteens also constitute a source of employment for over one hundred of cooks working in shift to prepare the meals. Every day, 14 cooks are mobilized for this task. Thus, the objective of the school canteen programme is two-fold:

- ensure children's school attendance;
- develop the local economy around the management of school canteens.



Canteen of Sahofika © IMPACT Madagascar



Red-bellied lemur © S. Meys

Socio-economic Component

- Improving the quality of life of the local populations, developing new Revenue Generating Activities, building infrastructure and means of communication, encouraging better hygiene practices and thus promoting better health in the communities.-



SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMPONENT

Socio-economic component

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We continued our collaboration with the NGO IMPACT Madagascar with the following aims:

- improving existing agricultural production systems;
- developing new revenue generating activities.

The participants benefit from training, donations of equipment and raw materials as well as constant support from our agronomists.

The Improved Paddy field System

We continued to support the families that benefit from the Improved Paddy field System (IPS). 212 families were registered for the IPS programme (+1 in 2023).

Off-Season campaign 2022-2023: All the families registered for this programme, participated in the 2022-2023 off-season campaign.

High Season Campaign 2023:

The 212 families (+1) registered for this programme, participated in the high season campaign 2023.

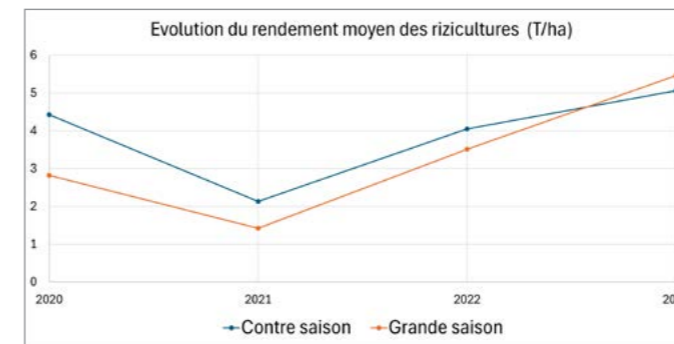
Results from the 2022 high season campaign	Results from the 2023 high season campaign
148 participants (98% of the beneficiaries).	212 participants (100% of the beneficiaries).
Area cultivated with the IPS: 6.53ha.	Area cultivated with the IPS: 11,3 ha. (+73%).
After the February cyclones, 64 participants replanted quickly and abandoned the IPS. Hence, only 84 participants really practiced the IPS for this campaign, or 56.7%.	Average yield: 5.46 T/ha (i.e. an increase by over 55%).
Average yield: 3.51 T/ha for the beneficiaries who practiced the IPS to the end, 2.41 T/ha for the others. However, even though the paddy fields resisted the cyclones relatively well, the yields are lower despite the IPS.	Destination of harvests: 28% for personal consumption, 4% for sale, 2% for seeds, 66% stocked.
Destination of the harvests: 38% for personal consumption, 2% for sale (for only 12 beneficiaries or 8%) 1% in seeds, 59% stocked.	



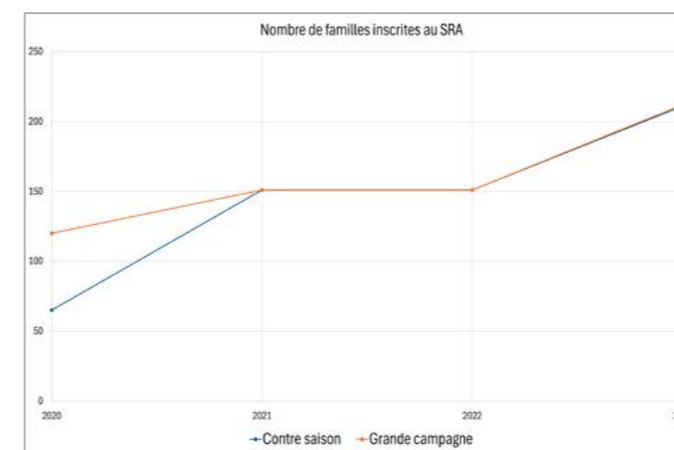
Aerial view of the paddy fields © S. Meys

The significant increase in the number of IPS participants could be explained by a better technical expertise, which leads to an increased yield. This momentum reinforces the rice growers' motivation,

in particular in an environment where their difficulties have increased for several years (Covid, cyclones, inflation etc...).



Development of average yield of rice-growing (T/ha) - Off season/High season



Number of families registered for IPS - Off season/High season



Participation rate in the IPS - Off season/High season

Off-season campaign 2023-2024

The 212 families registered for this program participated in this campaign. The results will be known in 2024.

Vegetable Crops

Over 800 participants were registered for the

vegetable campaign 2023, i.e. twice the number of participants of the previous year. Over 42 tonnes of vegetables were produced, most of which was consumed by market gardeners. The table below shows the summary of the last three years:

	2021	2022	2023
Number of beneficiaries	501	436	869
Area cultivated (ha)	7,82	3,37	2,32
Global quantity of vegetables harvested (kg)	43919	28835	42731
Average proceeds per beneficiary (Ariary)	15868	15941	24475

In 2021, farmers planted all the seeds that had been provided to them at the same period.

At the time of the harvests, a lot of fruits came into the market, thus leading to a significant decrease in sales price. Some beneficiaries were discouraged at that time and chose not to participate in the programme on the following year. In order to prevent such a situation, a suggestion was made for the farmers to spread crops over several periods, which subsequently leads to a significant decrease in cultivated areas.

Regarding vegetable production, it is interesting to note a similarity in the quantities harvested in 2021 and 2023, despite the variation in number of farmers. This could be explained by the quantities of seeds distributed. In 2021, each beneficiary received approximately 4 seed packets, whereas in 2023, only 3 packets per person were distributed. However, the sales enabled the beneficiaries to make proceeds which were 1,5 higher than the preceding year.

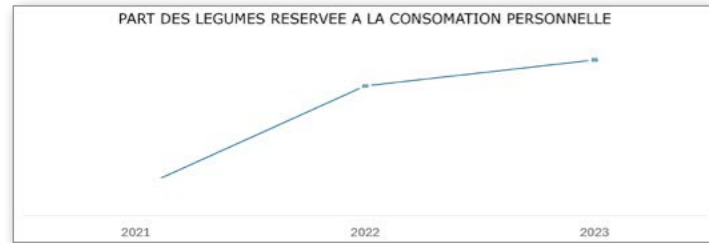
Those results arise as a result of a staggering of crops and prioritization of some of them.

In addition, the beneficiaries are now well experienced in the cultivation of vegetables.

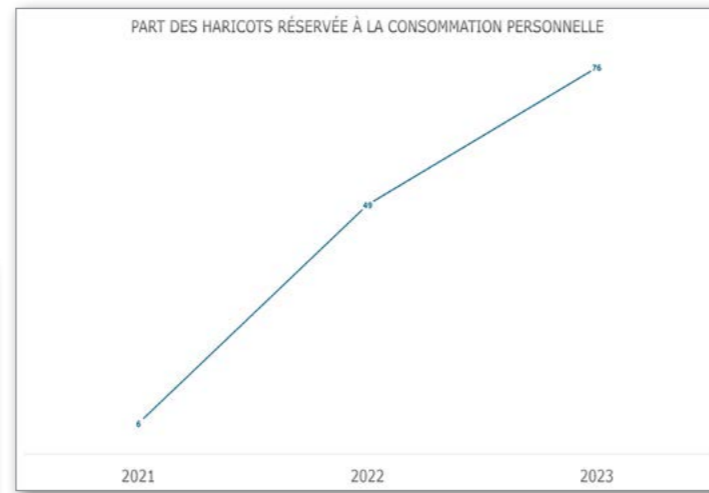


SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMPONENT

Over the last three years, the portion of vegetables used for personal consumption has increased. This trend is explained by the persistent consequences of the 2022 cyclones, with which farmers are still faced, as well as inflation.



Portion of vegetables used for personal consumption



Portion of beans for personal consumption © Helpsimus

The proceeds from the sales of vegetables were mainly used for the purchase of essential products and the funding of the other AGRs.

7 species of vegetable were cultivated in 2023 (anamamy, carrot, courgette, cabbage, petsai, ramirebaka, onion and tomato).

In 2021, we started a programme for growing beans in 15 villages which now benefit to 860 families.

Quantity of beans harvested (T)	Destination of harvests
3.68 T	76% for personal consumption 24% for sale

A significant increase of beans for personal consumption has been observed after the 2022 cyclones, a trend that continues this year.

An increasing number of persons have taken part in the farm product programme and yield has improved, which shows the increasing mastery of the techniques taught.

At the same time, the harvests for personal consumption and stockage have increased. This trend highlights the increasing challenges the farmers have been faced with since the 2022 cyclones, aggravated by the impact of inflation.

Fish farming

The number of beneficiaries amounted to 65 in 2023. About fifty basins were inspected, and there has been no loss of fish.

En 2023, 1144 fishes were removed from the basins by the beneficiaries, including 870 which were sold in the Tsaratanana market, thus representing 76% of the total. This portion has remained relatively stable compared to the preceding year. The global income from the sales amounts to 2,352,000 Ar.

Number of registered	Number of participants in 2023	Area cultivated	Beneficiaries assessed
860 (twice as much as in 2022)	860 (100%) Number of participants this year. Over 4 times as much as in 2022.	6 ha	782 (91%)

Socio-economic component



Fish farm designed around a paddy field © IMPACT Madagascar

Reforestation

The reforestation campaign was launched at the same time as the forest restoration campaign. In 2023, our agronomists monitored 78 individual reforestation parcels, covering a global area of almost 1ha where the survival rate of the saplings is 87%.

Over 800 acacia saplings were planted, of which nearly 60% were planted in the most deteriorated forest fragments in order to shade. In 2023, our nurseries produced 600 cinnamon plants.



Tree nursery © S. Meys

5 of the Greater Bamboo lemurs and where a group of Red-bellied lemurs lives regularly as well as a female Madagascar Long-eared owl.

The tour guides attended a training to conduct visits in Malagasy and in French. They are now able to provide detailed information on the animals, their behavior and their food, as well as on the history of the various groups of lemurs of Ankolana, in particular Group 5 and the family of Red-bellied lemurs.



Tour guides attending training © S. Meys



Reception desk's interior © S. Meys

Various posters were deposited at the reception desk.

Ecotourism project

The ecotourism project (for day tours) has been developed at Sahofika on the territory of Group

monitor several animal species: the Madagascar Long-eared owl (*Asio madagascariensis*), several groups of lemurs (Greater Bamboo lemurs and Red-bellied lemurs) and to manage camera traps (mongoose and mouse lemurs).

Craftwork

In addition, we have continued working with Mamy, the embroiderer from Ranomafana to develop the embroidery project. We have provided him with a sewing machine and we worked together to design new embroidered products, such as the small frames presented below.



Embroidered chameleons © D. Rouillet

In addition, we have created a small cloth backpack which will be distributed to the Simus School children who take part in the



SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMPONENT

forest visits.



Backpacks for children © D. Rouillet

The first series will be ready next year. Then, Mamy will train the seams embroider/seamstress from Ambodigoavy, who will share the orders with him, thus guaranteeing regular income, given that approximately 250 bags should be ordered each year.

We bought the new collection from 3 sculptors as well as a new series of soubise made from raffia.



The sculptors presenting their work © D. Rouillet

We have made the inventory of all the craft products stored in the apartment located in Ranomafana with a view to the next opening of the shop at Ranomafana.

Climate overview

In January, the tropical storm Cheneso caused heavy rains in our area of activity. As a consequence, the track between Ifanadiana and Tsaratanana was flooded, which complicated the work of our teams.

In February, our area of activity was affected by the cyclone Freddy, with a point of impact which was similar to that of the 2022 cyclones.

This cyclone brought very strong winds, although less severe than those of Batsirai, and a restricted amount of rain, yet they continued until April. Thus, no major flood took place following this cyclone, like last year. However, about one hundred houses were destroyed in the villages. In addition, fruit trees were uprooted and the manioc plants were bent and broken. As regards rice, it had been harvested before the cyclone. No damage in the schools, apart from the roof of the kitchen in Ambodigoavy and a gutter which was grubbed up in Vohitrarivo.

The nursery fencing did not resist violent winds and a tree fell in the nursery of Sahofika. However, the loss is negligible, only a dozen of plants was destroyed. No visible damage in the forest fragments.

Track overview

As a result of persistent rain caused by the cyclone Freddy, the track to our area of activity has considerably deteriorated, so that most of the time it can't allow cars. Since 2019, we are the only one having performed service of the track, and given the global condition of roads in Madagascar, the situation is unlikely to change.



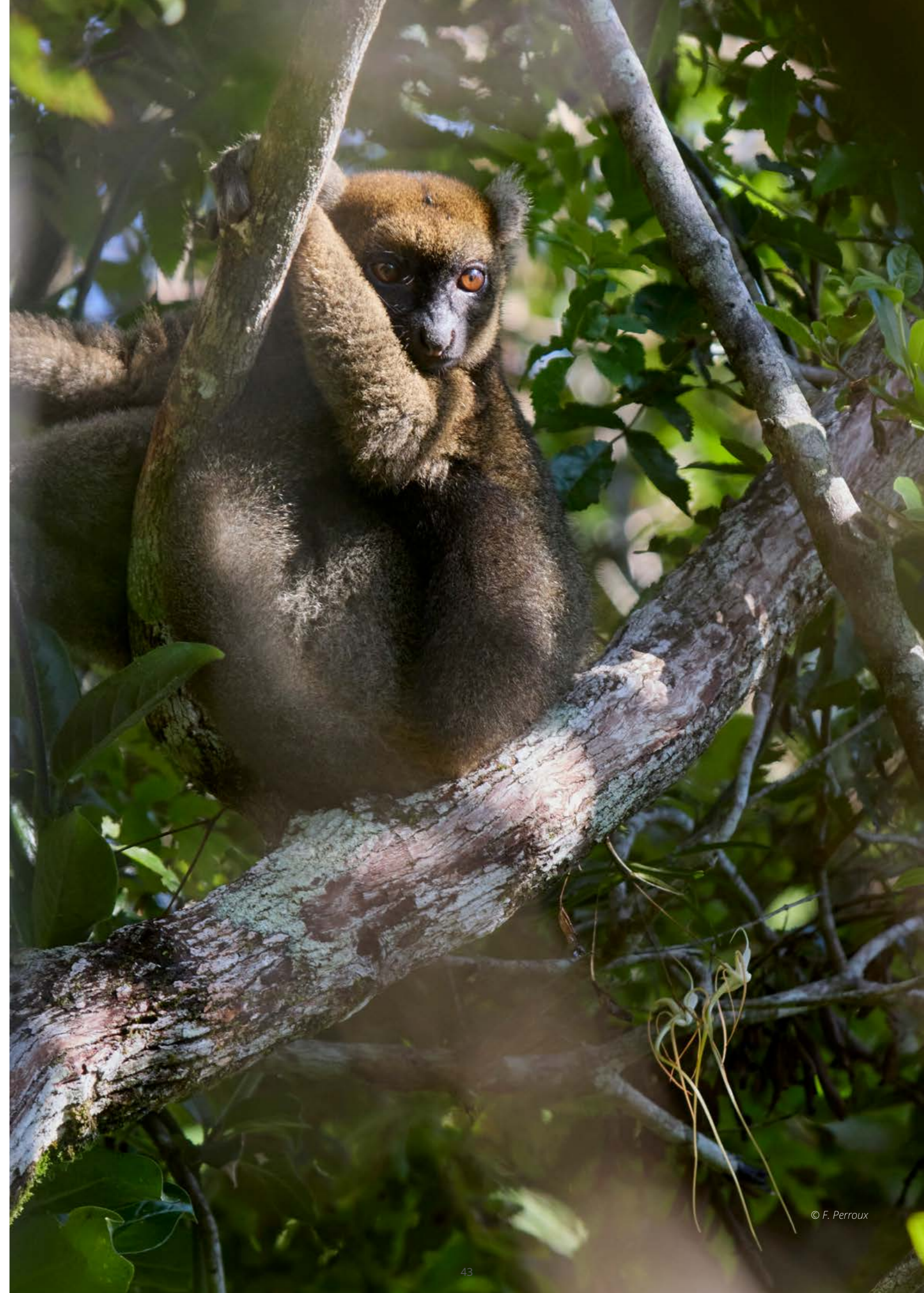
Bogged down Vehicle © S. Meys



Flooded track © D. Rouillet

After a difficult year following the cyclones, we could not carry out many works this year, except for the repair of small bridges in order to facilitate transportation of material.

In October, the main bridge leading to our area of activity collapsed due to the excess weight of a truck. The bridge allowed for



© F. Perroux



SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMPONENT

crossing a river in every season. We do not know whether or not it will be repaired and if so at what time.

The logistics become particularly complicated, all the more so as no works have been initiated regarding the other portions of the track.



Bridge that collapsed © D. Roullet

Departure of the local coordinator

Our local coordinator, Avotra Randrianarijaona no longer works for Helpsimus. Since the start of the Covid epidemic, we had continuously reduced his workload, positioning him as a logistics specialist in charge of the monitoring of the works. Despite the various adaptations of post and several meetings and appraisal meetings with him, the quality of his work deteriorated, thus forcing us to make this difficult decision.

His departure does not have any impact on the programme's operation, given that we had gradually reorganized and

redistributed the various missions entrusted to him to other members of the team.

Chef Rivo, liaison officer of the Ranomafana Park, who is also paid by Helpsimus, is in charge of managing the local guides, maintenance of the campsites and the logistics of some activities. We also rely on the reinforced teams of the NGO IMPACT Madagascar for the development of some activities.

Last, we have hired a driver/mechanic who manages the car and the motorbike of Helpsimus. He is also able to carry out specific missions, when needed.

The coordination of the programme is thus entrusted to various persons who have specific skills, which significantly improved our efficiency.

Improving irrigation

The works to improve irrigation started in 2019 and include 4 stages, it being specified that stage 3 was completed in 2023.

They consist in building irrigation network (including bridges) and dams. Completion process of the works takes time given that they are costly, with a budget of over €15,000 per stage.

The table below provides details on the 4 stage works.



Irrigation works © IMPACT Madagascar

Stage	Location	Completion	Beneficiaries (direct)	Irrigated area Ha (minimum)	Status
1	Soanerana (Vohitrarivo)	2019	> 40	6.5	Completed
2	Sahandraza (Vohitrarivo)	End of 2022 - Early 2023	18	4	Completed
3	Ambohipo-Sakovy	Early 2023	>19	3	Completed
4	Ambodimanga	-	53	>4	Waiting for budget
Total			>130	>17.5	

They are essential to ensure better management of water in crops and in particular in paddy fields.

Those works have also enabled families to resume cultivating their parcels, which had become impossible given the lack of water.

Resuming cultivating those parcels has contributed in reducing the pressure on the forest fragments.

The beneficiaries of those works form part of a local association which we have been accompanying to ensure the regular maintenance of the network and its future.



Irrigation works © IMPACT Madagascar



HELPSIMUS NEWS

Annual Conference of the EAZA

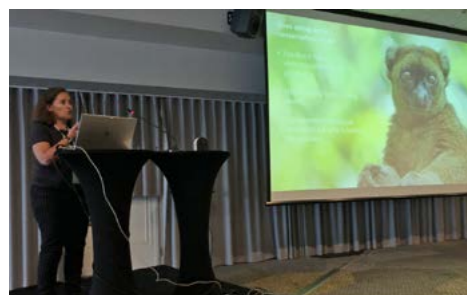
We participated in the Annual Conference of the EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria) which took place from 12 to 16 September in Helsinki in Finland.

Delphine Roulet, our Director, gave two presentations, one at the TAG Prosimiens meeting (Taxon Advisory Group) explaining how the protection of Greater Bamboo lemurs benefit other lemurs, and the other one at the small carnivore TAG meeting regarding the monitoring of Ring-tailed mongooses.



D. Roulet's presentation at the EAZA PTAG © F. Perroux

In addition, Florence Perroux, Director of Palmyre Conservation presented how art contributes to lemur conservation, basing herself on the example of Helpsimus.



Florence's presentation at the EAZA PTAG © D. Roulet

We also displayed two posters regarding the guarding of the paddy fields and the school canteens. Our participation in this conference was made possible thanks to Cotswold Wildlife Park's support.

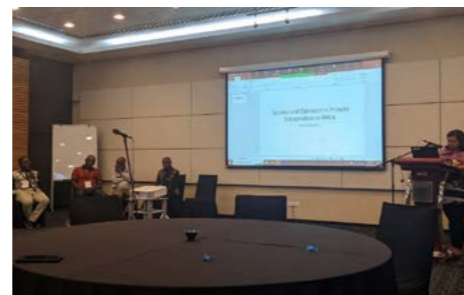
Other congresses

In March, we participated in a workshop in Antananarivo organized by the UICN regarding the lessons drawn from the completion of projects supported by the SOS Lemurs initiative, of which we benefited twice in 2017 and 2018.

Also in March, our director Delphine Roulet participated in the Yaboumba Junior 2023 Congress at the Ecole Nationale Vétérinaire of Toulouse, presenting the management of the consequences of the Batsirai cyclones and the lessons we drew from this. She also discussed about her career and Helpsimus' activities in Madagascar in the podcast "Bien dans ses poils" ("Felling good about oneself") which deals with animal-related occupations.

Josia Razafindramana, representative of our partner IMPACT Madagascar, took part in the IPS Congress which took place in Kuching in Malaysia from 19 to 25 August 2023. This congress gathered over 500 worldwide

primatologists. During the event, Josia chaired a panel discussion on the theme "Success and optimism regarding the conservation of primates in Madagascar and in Africa", enabling her to present concrete examples of successful conservation programs in Madagascar, in particular those implemented by Helpsimus and IMPACT Madagascar.



Josia's presentation at the IPS à l'IPS © DR

Miscellaneous

We have supported the exhibition "Of Lemurs and men" (Des lémuriens et des hommes) presented in September by Sébastien Meys at the Festiphoto of the Rambouillet Forest.

Our partner Univet Nature organized a "super raffle": part of the proceeds went to us for the construction of our research center.

Publications

EAZA Prosimian TAG Newsletter n°22.





HELPSIMUS TOUR

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2023
ANNUAL REPORT





PARTNERS 2023

≥ €20,000

Fondation Audemars Piguet - RP - Palmyre Conservation - Fondation Air France - Fondation Le PAL Nature - Le Poids du Vivant

€10,000 - €20,000

Cotswold Wildlife Park - Boissière Mervent Conservation - Pure Trade - Univet Nature - Photosol - Association of Friends of Tierpark Hagenbeck

€5,000 - €10,000

AFdPZ - Parc Zoologique de Paris - Sainte Croix Biodiversité - NaturZoo Rheine - Fondation Yves Rocher - Thoiry Conservation - SECAS

€3,000 - €5,000

CERZA - Zoo de Jurques - Parcs Lumigny - Zoo de Montpellier - Conservatoire pour la Protection des Primates - Ecofaune - ESF

€1,500 - €3000

Zoo de Cologne - Zoo de la Citadelle de Besançon - SpaycificZoo - ZOA Conservation - African Zoo Safari - Zoo d'Heidelberg - Parc de Clères - Parc Zoologique et Botanique de Mulhouse

< €1,500

Saho Vidua - AFSA - Zoo des Sables d'Olonne - Zoo du Bassin d'Arcachon - Touroparc - AFVPZ - Association Mammifères Africains - VETNET

Our Malagasy partners:



Logistic support:



Et the members of Helpsimus!





FINANCIAL STATEMENT

In 2022, we received special funds to manage the consequences of two cyclones that caused considerable damage in our area of activity. This is the reason why income and expenditure decreased significantly in 2023.

However, compared to 2021, income and expenditure have increased from 2021 to 2023.

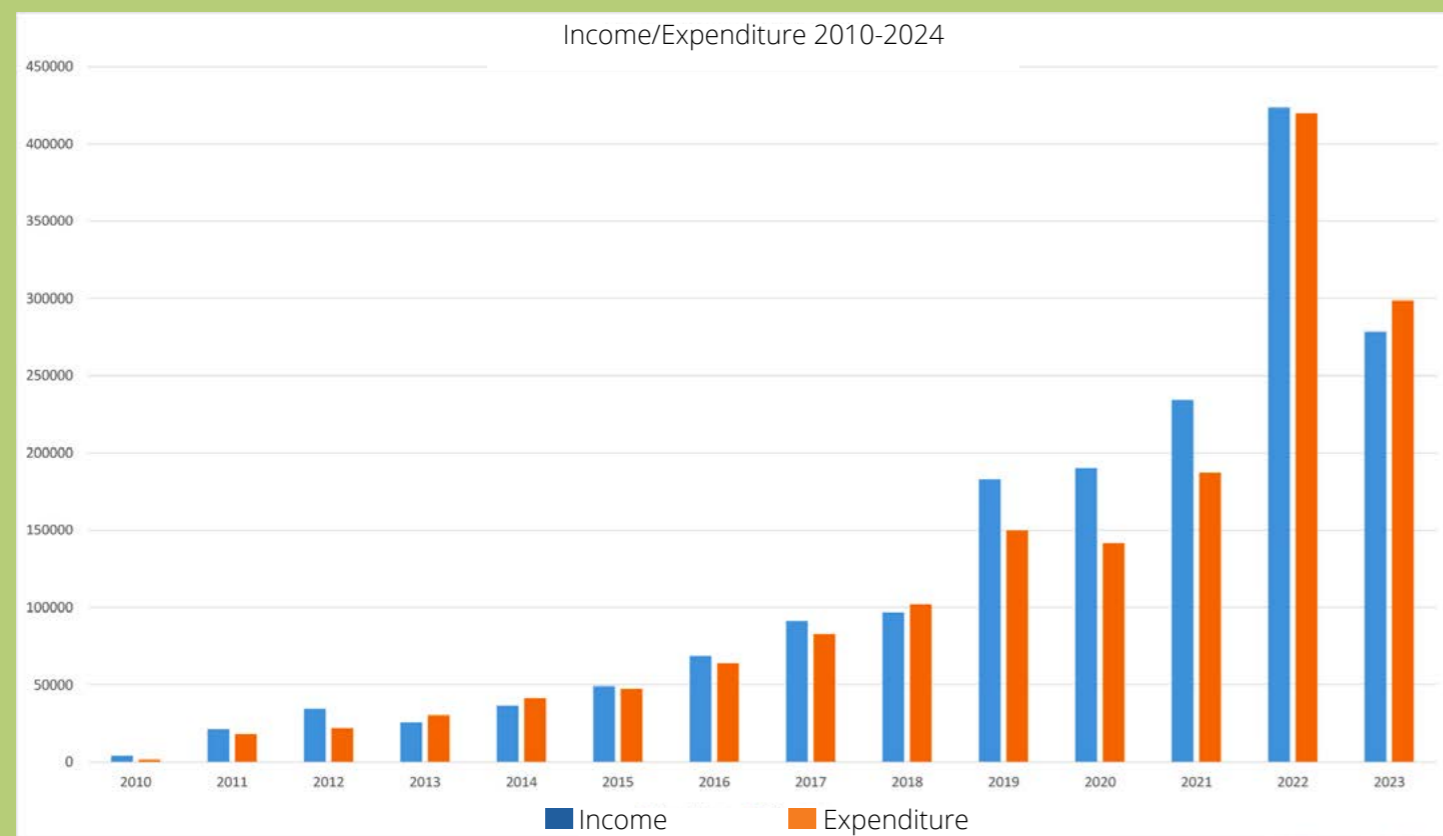
It should be noted that a specific fund is dedicated to financing Delphine Rouillet's salary, the only employee of the Association, without it affecting the programme's general budgets.

The overall total shows a loss which can be explained by the fact that in 2022, Helpsimus received a funding covering two years regarding activities carried out in 2022 and 2023. Yet, the funding part for 2023 has not been included in the revenues of that year, which can give the impression that we spent more than we had. In fact, we have reached a balance.

In addition, last year, we had to cope with emergency situations, such as carry out essential work on the track to our study site, and thus using reserves we had not replenished yet.

Since 2023, the accounts have been managed by an accounting firm (FIDUCIAL) which will make carry overs from one year to another, when necessary, in the event of multi-year funding.

In Madagascar, almost 400 persons now work on our conservation programme. Of course, not all of them work full time, yet they thus have additional income: local guides, tour guides, teachers, educators, paddy field guards, canteen cooks, patrollers, nurserymen, agronomists, biologists, conservation agents, drivers etc.



Financial statement

Operating income	Amount (€)	Operating Costs	Amount (€)
Memberships and sponsorships	1210	Bamboo Lemur Programme (includes in particular payments to team in the terrain)	51700
Sales of goods (Helpsimus shop and illustrated booklets)	4655	IMPACT Madagascar (Malagasy partner on the BL Programme)	142700
Donations from zoos	122264	Acquisition of a private land	12400
Donations from NGOs/associations/FDD/Foundations	93167	Entrepreneur Landry (real estate constructions)	40000
Donations from firms	46500	Purchase of equipment (equipment for the terrain and merchandise for the Helpsimus shop and office equipment etc.)	7167
Individual donations	8618	Mission expenses (Madagascar and France)	5264
Other	24	External expenses (rend Ranomafana apartment, insurance, banks, subscriptions, fiducial expertise, postal charges etc.)	5923
		Staff costs	30638
		Woolly lemur illustrated booklet	2052
		Rambouillet photo exhibition	300
		Training (Malagasy lessons)	414
		External services (consulting)	200
TOTAL	276438	TOTAL	298759
Operating result	-22320		
Financial proceeds	2169		
OVERALL TOTAL	-20151		



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