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Foreword

Dear Friends,

The publishing of our 2015 annual report demonstrated our engagement and our value to the projects we initiated.

While finding solutions to improve the protection of biodiversity in this region and raising the awareness of the local communities through the schools, our campaigns and activities ran into many obstacles, whether it was in the renovation of the Abidjan Zoo or the clean-up of the beaches of Sal, in Cape Verde.

The protection of the environment should not only be of interest to a small circle of nature lovers. The protection of our natural heritage is intimately connected to the vast challenges that the human-race is facing and it is in the interest of every person on this planet. Helping to improve the conditions of animals in zoos contributes to meeting these challenges. Zoos are becoming more and more important for educational purposes because they support the genetic diversity of threatened species and even create a safe haven where certain species can continue to survive, when there is no longer a safe place for them in the wild.

All of Calao’s activities are based in our motto: Education = Conservation. From now on, we are working upstream to organise programmes that will make it possible for local authorities to have access to education on the protection of biodiversity and their environment.

We could not do this work without your unconditional support; this work and the foundations laid down during the past year enable us to set out the long-term impact of Calao.

Sophie Decelle
President of the Association of Calao asbl (not-for-profit organisation)
« Calao plays an on the ground role at local level. In efforts directed at awareness-raising on issues of education and conservation, we are laying the foundations for education on the conservation of biodiversity. To this end, we focus on local populations and encourage them to promote and defend our mission. We wish to better motivate them and give them a sense of responsibility, in particular young people, to prepare them for the development of their country and to help them to pass on the benefits to future generations. »

Irène Martins

« Calao enjoys a long experience in the domain of education and conservation of biodiversity. Our wish is to continue our action jointly with the local public powers for which the environmental stakes are reaching crucial parameters for various reasons, be they economic, social, identity or in terms of image. Our projects need to be maintained over time and the best way to do this is to train and educate the populations on local issues as well as the large environmental challenges of the 21st century. »

Aymeric Thuault

« According to statistics, by the year 2050 there will be more plastic materials in the seas and oceans than fish. Waste is dumped into the sea by industrial activities such as large-scale fishing, and via waterways. Among the different types of waste, plastic is still the most problematic. Plastic never breaks down completely, but it fragments into micro particles, acting as a lure to marine fauna, such as turtles, which confuse the plastic with jellyfish. Unfortunately, the islands of Cape Verde are very vulnerable to the increase of plastic. As part of its activities in Cape Verde, in 2016 Calao successfully launched its first campaign of awareness-raising and regular clean-up of the beaches with the aim to try to reduce such waste. Other sustainable solutions linked to waste recycling are in the process of being studied. The goal is to prevent, reduce and recycle waste by raising awareness and through education, as is the motto of Calao. »

Patrick Dorvil

« The preservation of the environment and biodiversity is a global challenge today. It is not only an obligation of the political and institutional spheres; this challenge appeals to our sense of responsibility as human beings and as citizens of this planet. For this reason, the importance of educating populations as to the importance of biodiversity is the founding notion of Calao asbl (not-for-profit) since 2004.

Our association innovatively joins together in partnership « conservation = education » across the many projects which it undertook across the years. From the school of semi-nomad Samburus communities in the Motapes village in Kenya to the large work which enabled the survival and continued operation of the Abidjan Zoo in the years following the civil war in the Côte d’Ivoire up to the initiative to eliminate plastic waste from the beaches of Cape Verde; all of our projects aim to raise awareness among the local populations to protect their region and their natural habitat.

Our goal is for local youth to be able to transfer their acquired knowledge, thanks to our activities, and thus take an active role in the sustainable development of their own country. »

Valentina Cefalu
Our team

President
Sophie Decelle

General Secretary
Aymeric Thuault
Cape Verde Project

Treasurer
Valentina Cefalu

Interim Treasurer
Paul Boulos Chahine
Cape Verde Project

Administrator
Irène Martins
Cape Verde Project

Administrator
Patrick Dorvil
Cape Verde Project

Education Coordinator
Oumar Kanté
Abidjan Zoo Project

Webmaster
Joel Sop

International expert on animal health
Hilda Tresz
Abidjan Zoo Project
About Calao asbl

Our mission

The conservation of animal species and the development of nearby populations go hand in hand; while supporting education of people, biodiversity and the environment can also be protected. Our actions help local communities to put their children through school without changing their socio-cultural values. The first project of the Calao Association (Calao) was the creation of a nursery school to give the Samburus, a semi-nomad tribe of North Kenya, the opportunity to learn to read and write.

As part of its efforts to conserve biodiversity, Calao joins up with zoos so that it can give them support. These zoos commit themselves to sustainable development and to awareness-raising on conservation of the environment. They are particularly conscious of the need to take action to safeguard threatened species and ecosystems; conservation of biodiversity is made a priority.

Founded in 2004, Calao Association asbl (Calao) is an international association located in Luxembourg; the association’s principal aim is to ensure the education on the conservation of biodiversity and its natural habitat while creating and supporting development projects and educational programmes for communities in East and West Africa.

All the activities of Calao are part of its remit of engagement that favours the basic principal: *Education = Conservation*.

Through our actions, we are convinced that we can strengthen our impact by working in collaboration with local NGOs and public institutions.

Calao is registered as a « non-profit association » with the Chamber of Commerce Registration Office in Luxembourg.

In order to ensure a better impact of our projects, the next step in our strategy will be to register Calao as a « non-governmental organisation » (NGO).

This new naming will strengthen our ability to influence local actors. To ensure the implementation of this important next step, all our members are committed to improving the effectiveness of our collaboration. We must simplify and streamline our methods, reduce complexity and sustain the interest of wide-scale integration and a spirit of open-mindedness.
Our partners
Our beneficiaries

Sal Island
Preserve the beaches of Cape Verde through the 2015 Depollution Project

Abidjan Zoo
1) Renovation from May 2011 to May 2016, and
2) Awareness-raising through education of local communities since October 2016

Matapes Community School
Conception of the school and teaching literacy to the Samburu tribe, 2004 - 2009
On-going projects

1. Abidjan Zoo (CIV) – Renovation and introduction of a programme of awareness-raising among local populations

   Duration: 2011-2016

Since 2011, associations, diplomatic services and volunteers took it in turns to help the zoo in Abidjan to keep going. Animals were dying from malnutrition and because of the inexperience of the local veterinary, but in particular because of poor management of the zoo. Insufficient financial resources were allocated to the zoo by the Ministry of Water and Forests, which led to despondency among the zoo caretakers and hence poor maintenance of the animal pens.

During 2016, Sophie Decelle undertook one single mission in the Côte d'Ivoire. This allowed for the development of a strategy within the domain of education, one that was applicable to all the association’s projects. To encourage communities to actively support and protect biodiversity, Calao hopes to implement educational programmes across schools and zoos in the region of West Africa. The education philosophy to help all zoos and aquariums to reach international standards should integrate the principals of environmental education and sustainability, which are generally encompassed in the education of conservation. Progressively developed by the team, the Calao project enables school pupils to learn the basics of biology and could be structured around the wider approach/modules of traineeship.

To that end, in 2015 Jeremy Fontaine, animal caretaker at the San Diego Zoo (USA), raised 2,000 USD for Calao. Thus, Jeremy hopes to promote public awareness and contribute to conservation efforts through education. Every year, projects are chosen and benefit from funds collected during an annual event organised by « Golf for Wildlife ».

Since the education of local communities is one of Calao’s priorities, the Board of Governors appointed Mr Oumar Kanté, a local schoolteacher, as the Official Coordinator of Calao’s educational programmes. He is responsible for the...
implementation of an educational programme related to the conservation of different species and their environment in the Côte d’Ivoire. He participated in the name of Calao in the "National Ecotourism Days" where he presented Calao’s activities.

The EIB Institute gave an iPad to Oumar as a token of their thanks for his dedication to educational programmes in the northwest of the Côte d’Ivoire (CIV). This tool allows him to give presentations to the school classes for which he is responsible.

In 2016, as in previous years, Calao asbl contributed to the schooling of the children of the zookeepers of the Abidjan Zoo. They raised 550 EUR, which Malinne Blomberg, a very active volunteer at the zoo and chimpanzee friend, matched. This money will allow each child to receive school supplies.

Hilda Tresz, a consultant in the field of rehabilitation of chimpanzees in the zoo world, and a member of Calao in the context of the rehabilitation of the Abidjan Zoo, has published a video, "I have a week to make a change" showing her work with the zoos.

Thanks to the EIB Institute’s donation of 6 iPads, to the value of 930 EUR, Calao was able to finance the emergency repair of enclosures damaged by storms. This work was carried out by volunteers.

Calao is faced with the dilemma of whether or not to continue with their activities in the Abidjan Zoo (CIV). Activities are often inexplicably sabotaged by the management of the Zoo, and above all by a government which has little interest in the “well-being” of the zoo’s animals. Calao believes that simply continuing in the field of education would be a better contribution for the Côte d’Ivoire.
2. Conservation of biodiversity and education of local communities - Sal, Cape Verde

In keeping with our motto Education = Conservation, Calao took on new challenges in 2015.

Its mission is to protect the exceptional biodiversity of Cape Verde and to educate local communities. Waste pollution comes mainly from the fishing industry. Cape Verde's beaches represent the third largest area of loggerhead turtles. Sea turtles pay a heavy price because their nesting area is ever more polluted with marine debris and is shrinking due to the encroachment of hotel projects and tourism, not to mention global climate problems. The abundance of cetaceans in the archipelago suggests an inevitable impact on their population.

See the related video

Solutions proposed by Calao:

- Setting up a system for the regular collection of marine litter, which accumulates on the beaches of Sal Island;
- Involvement of local volunteers;
- The implementation of an awareness-raising programme on waste and recycling in schools in Sal
- The construction of a waste treatment platform, with the logistical support of the local authorities of Sal. This recycling unit would be able to compact both part of the marine debris and waste produced locally (e.g. plastic bottles generated by the tourism industry).

Since October 2015, we have carried out 10 cleaning operations and collected more than 10 tonnes of waste.

We have not yet been able to launch an educational programme planned for 2016 but we hope to set it up with the help of local authorities and the support of the Central Government from 2018. The intention is to educate children in the schools of Sal in Portuguese in cooperation with local NGOs.
Completed projects

Primary school of the Matapes Community

Calao started its activity in 2003 with the launching of an educational project with the Samburu community in the northern region of Kenya.

The Samburu people are in the Rift Valley Province, to the south and south-east of Lake Turkana. The life of the Samburuses, a group of nomadic shepherds, is determined by the feeding needs of their cattle. As a result, they do not live near schools. The aim of this project was to increase the literacy of the community that lives in the villages of Matapes (Latakwen region, N'Dolo Mountains) and to provide them with health assistance.

After an exhaustive study of the needs of the villages, a nursery school with a boarding school was built (maximum capacity of 60 children with 2 classes and 2 dormitories). The Nazareth kindergarten was created for children between the ages of 3 and 6, but also offered evening classes for adults and children who could not attend school during the day. Construction began in December 2004 and the school opened its doors on 6 February 2006 with 32 children.

Under the agreement signed between the community and Calao, the association pledged to support the school for one year, but this support continued for three consecutive years until July 2009. Since then, the Government of Kenya has fully taken over the activities of this school together with the Latakwen primary school.

The enthusiasm and confidence of the Samburu Community in our project far exceeded all expectations with more than 110 children attending the school. A veritable success! That said, the long drought season that hit the villages of Matapes and the entire region for seven months between 2016 and 2017 caused many families to migrate thus drastically reducing all school activities. Nevertheless, 110 children still participate in this programme.
Today Calao is once again active in this educational project, offering intensive training courses for the young villagers who wish to become teachers in the school of Matapes. Lakote Joseph Lalkalepi is an example of the success of this new project: the young Samburu will complete his course by the end of 2017 and he now already assists local teachers in their daily tasks at school. With a donation of 250 EUR, Calao can cover the intensive training course for one semester.

(Photo: Lakote reviews children's lessons)

2006 = 32 children
2015 = 117 children
2016 = 110 children
Overview of the financial situation of Calao

1. Assets for 2016

In 2016 donations were the main source of income of Calao. They usually come from private sponsors (individuals) and international organisations such as the EIB Institute, embassies and banks etc.
2. Expenditure for 2016

Donations received for SOS Ponso are systematically donated to the SOS Ponso association. The donation received for education at the Abidjan Zoo has not yet been paid into Calao’s account due to the administrative difficulties that the Americans have with payments made in Luxembourg. However, the sum of 2,000 US is still considered in the budget.