



## Who we are!

The Association Européenne pour l'Etude et la Conservation des Lémuriens (AEECL) is a consortium of European zoological gardens and universities, who have joined forces to carry out a conservation and research programme for Madagascar's highly endangered lemurs. The non-governmental organisation was founded by the zoological gardens of Mulhouse, Cologne and Saarbrücken and the University of Strasbourg, and is based in Mulhouse, France. Today we have member institutions from all over Europe.



## What we do!

### A blue-eyed flagship species

The Sclater's or blue-eyed black lemur (*Eulemur flavifrons*) is, besides man, the only species of primate which, as its name suggests, has blue eyes. These animals occur almost exclusively on the Sahamalaza Peninsula, a very remote area in northwest Madagascar.

The Sahamalaza region has been in AEECL's focus of scientific and conservation interest since 1988. The blue-eyed black lemur, endemic to this

part of Madagascar, has been selected as the flagship species for all conservation efforts concerning the region. For many years AEECL, with the Malagasy protected areas authority (ANGAP), has been working towards the implementation of a national protected area on the Sahamalaza Peninsula. Our first goal was reached in 2001, when UNESCO declared Sahamalaza a biosphere reserve. The region was finally declared a National Park in June 2007.

## Research programme

AEECL has established a permanent research and conservation station in the Ankarafa Forest, probably the largest continuous area of blue-eyed black lemur habitat still remaining. This station serves as a base for research work on the conservation ecology of Sahamalaza's lemurs, and for conservation measures in Sahamalaza. Researchers, financed by AEECL, have been working on the taxonomy of lemur genera such as the bamboo lemurs (*Haplemur*), the sportive lemurs (*Lepilemur*) and the sifakas (*Propithecus*) and are helping to clarify their systematics using cytogenetic methods.

## Community-based natural resource management programme

In Sahamalaza we are helping the local people save their natural heritage through development programmes and conservation education. This includes help with cultivation, reforestation, fire control and protection, schools, and provision of drinking water.



## Zoo-based conservation: European Endangered Species Programmes (EEP)

The member zoos have furthermore initiated captive breeding programmes for the blue-eyed black lemur as well as for the crowned lemur (*Eulemur coronatus*) and the red-bellied lemur (*Eulemur rubriventer*) within the framework of EAZA. These programmes aim at establishing a self-sustaining captive population of the respective species which can serve both as a model population to learn more about the species' biology as well as a reserve for possible future reintroduction projects.



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