

A Rocha International Review
2010/2011



A ROCHA

Christians in Conservation

About A Rocha

Our name

The A Rocha story began with the establishment of a field study centre in Portugal in 1983. The name is Portuguese and means 'The Rock'.

Where we work

A Rocha has National Organizations in 19 countries: Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Ghana, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Peru, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, UK and USA.

What we do

A Rocha is an international Christian organisation which, inspired by God's love, engages in scientific research, environmental education and community-based conservation projects.

Who are we?

Over the years we've used a myriad of stories and anecdotes to try and communicate who we are, what we do, and where we work. However, I wonder if these really capture what A Rocha is at heart? The nature of our work: grassroots, community-led, country-specific, Christian-driven, scientifically rigorous and global, makes it hard to sum up A Rocha in a pithy one sentence catchphrase.



A Rocha: our name is Portuguese, but our community conservation work is worldwide. Here, from a centre in the heart of Kampala slums, our small team is running conservation clubs where children learn to plant trees – and grow vegetables. (Bernard Madden)



A Rocha began its work in Portugal, in 1983. This detail from a mural at the A Rocha Portugal field study centre shows some of the local birds in their habitats. Artwork: Catherine Hart. (Melissa Ong)

Yet it's important that you understand who we are and why A Rocha is unique and vital in today's world. Our Founder, Peter Harris, always says, 'The best way to learn about A Rocha is to spend a year with us.' Not helpful from a communications standpoint! Nevertheless, it captures the complexity of who we are.

Our donors have always been an important part of who we are – and a recent survey has confirmed the much valued loyalty of our existing supporters. Towards the end of this year we'll be launching a campaign aimed at attracting new donors from amongst the fast-growing groups who now follow our activities on the A Rocha website, Facebook and Twitter. We are determined to inspire the younger generation to catch our vision and realise that their support can help to extend our work into new areas.

We invite you to continue getting to know us, through our newsletters, our website and social media. Or better by far, volunteer with us or enjoy a holiday at one of our field study centres.

We also invite you to support us financially in whatever ways you can,

Chris Naylor, Executive Director,
A Rocha International

This report has been produced by the A Rocha International Team whose role is:

- To support the National Organizations by providing leadership and training programmes
- To publicise the work at an international level
- To foster the emergence of new A Rocha initiatives

Community-based conservation

A Rocha works with communities to restore and protect threatened habitats and endangered wildlife. As conservationists, we know that the actions of any community, for better or worse, affect their local habitats, and without their engagement any improvement cannot be sustained. As Christians, we are committed to community conservation because we believe that God made human beings an integral part of the creation, dependent on its health and diversity, with special responsibility to care for it. We believe that although people often cause the problem, they can also be the solution.

Case study: Protecting one of Africa's most important forests

The A Rocha Kenya field study centre, Mwamba, is on the coast and close to the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, an Important Bird Area which is vital for six Globally Threatened Species.

Having a permanent base here has enabled the team to build long-term relationships with local communities, and it became clear that a major reason for illegal logging in the forest was due to the need for local families to find cash for secondary school fees.

A Rocha Kenya initiated the ASSETS eco-bursary scheme as a vital component of their community conservation programme. It provides grants of up to 90% of a youngster's school fees. In return, parents agree not to log in the forest.

In 2010, 205 students received bursaries and 27 of these students were new, from eight primary schools.

In April, with many of the newer students and parents in the audience, some of the older students debated the question, 'Should Arabuko-Sokoke Forest be cleared for farmland and settlement?'. Parents and youngsters participate in a range of educational and practical conservation activities which are changing attitudes and behaviour. In August, two summer clubs were run at Mwamba, each for 20 ASSETS students over three days. They were shown local wildlife, such as turtles, and snorkelled on the nearby reefs, seeing multitudes of brightly coloured fish and other marine life for the first time, which they described as a fantastic experience. They learned about local conservation issues and gained additional teaching about career opportunities and HIV & AIDS prevention.

The major tree-planting event was at a secondary school in Mijomboni on the northern edge of the forest. ASSETS beneficiary parents, local church members and primary school children planted the highly valuable native hardwood



The Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* hunts insects from the middle-level canopy of the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and relies on natural tree cavities for nest sites. (Steffen Foerster)

Afzelia quanzensis. In addition, many families are learning how to grow trees for domestic needs on their own plots: fast-growing exotic species provide poles to rebuild their homes or sell for cash, relieving pressure on the forest, and the mangroves which protect the shore.

An ASSETS internship programme was initiated at Mwamba, enabling two school-leavers at a time to gain work experience: computer lessons, kitchen work, housekeeping, welcoming guests, working with tourists at the Gede Ruins Tree Platform and taking part in bird ringing and wildlife monitoring.

The nearby Turtle Bay Beach Club also offers internships to ASSETS graduates. Whilst training in their Controls Department for eight months, Fauzia Mwanjule lived at Mwamba and secured sponsorship for her university education from some generous Mwamba guests.

The income for ASSETS staff and fees comes from grants, individual donors and income-generating projects initiated by A Rocha, such as the provision of tree platforms and hides for tourists.

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest is now the largest stretch of coastal forest in Eastern Africa. (Dan Tay)



Fauzia Mwanjule, an ASSETS graduate now studying at Kenyatta University, Nairobi.



Environmental education



Vera Rolo

In 2010, over 15,000 people, of all ages, took part in our Environmental Education (EE) programmes. The programmes are generally experiential, locally focussed and aimed at involving people in practical conservation projects. They are designed to meet local needs so the activities are highly diverse. Urban children watch and enjoy wildlife; in Kenya and India we facilitate the protection of threatened species and habitats; whilst in Peru, children are planting and learning to nurture forests.

Case study: Providing training and resources for teachers in southern Portugal

A Rocha Portugal runs a field study centre in the Algarve. The surroundings and the adjacent Alvor estuary are particularly rich in wildlife and there is easy access to dunes, mudflats and marshes in an area which is now heavily built up and developed for tourism.

Each year about 1,000 school children visit to take part in outdoor activities based on the national science curriculum, led by A Rocha EE teachers. The children often watch bird ringing or release some of the moths which are regularly caught for identification and study.

The EE staff also train teachers from a wide range of disciplines as part of the Local Authority's 'Environmental Education by Art in the Algarve' project. Teachers from across the region are led around the estuary where they are shown evidence of the economical, social, historical, biological, environmental and recreational importance of the Alvor. They also learn about some of the ecological relationships and adaptations of the local plants and animals. Isabel Soares, A Rocha Portugal's EE Coordinator, says, 'Our aim is to enable these teachers to creatively apply this knowledge in their educational activities and bring their students to visit Ria de Alvor. Since 2008, over 180 'Art in the Algarve' teachers have received training with us.'

Vera Rolo, who teaches Biology and Geology at Mexilhoeira Grande School, was interviewed by Isabel:

Vera, why do you bring your students to A Rocha?
'Paula Banza, one of the A Rocha team, was a colleague when I taught in Lagos, so she invited me to visit the Ria de Alvor with her. I immediately scheduled outings for my 10th grade students because the resources you offered complemented the curricula for Biology and Geology. I now bring my 8th grade students each year.'

In what ways do students benefit?
'The outdoor activities and the knowledge acquired play an essential role in helping them to understand the classwork. Outings bring the lessons to life. Many students change their behaviour, especially in relation to their 'ecological footprint'.'

How has A Rocha helped your own career development?

'A Rocha became important when I was preparing for my Masters Degree. Your Scientific Director helped me to choose the theme for my thesis: 'Western Wetlands of Ria de Alvor'. He also helped me to identify wetland plants and locate relevant papers.'

A Rocha is an important resource for all the local science teachers, enabling us to continue learning and to keep up to date.

I keep coming back here, not just because of the quality of the training for myself and my students, but also because of the kindness I've experienced and the warmth of the welcome. And, of course, Paula's excellent cakes!



A Rocha's field study centre beside the Ria de Alvor is a unique resource for schools who want their pupils to understand the biological richness of the local dunes, marshes and estuaries.

Scientific research

A Rocha has field study centres in Canada, France, Portugal, Kenya, India, the UK and the Czech Republic. These centres enable the teams to undertake long-term research and monitoring programmes, often involving residential volunteers. Most of our research, whether or not based at a centre, aims to inform conservation priorities.

Case study: Protecting remnant populations of Chimpanzees in Ghana

A century ago, between one and two million Chimpanzees lived in 25 African countries. Today, the Chimpanzee is classified as Endangered, and in Ghana, where nearly 70% of the original Upper Guinean forest has been cleared, the Western Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes verus* is extremely threatened through the loss and fragmentation of its habitats, as well as by trapping for the pet trade.

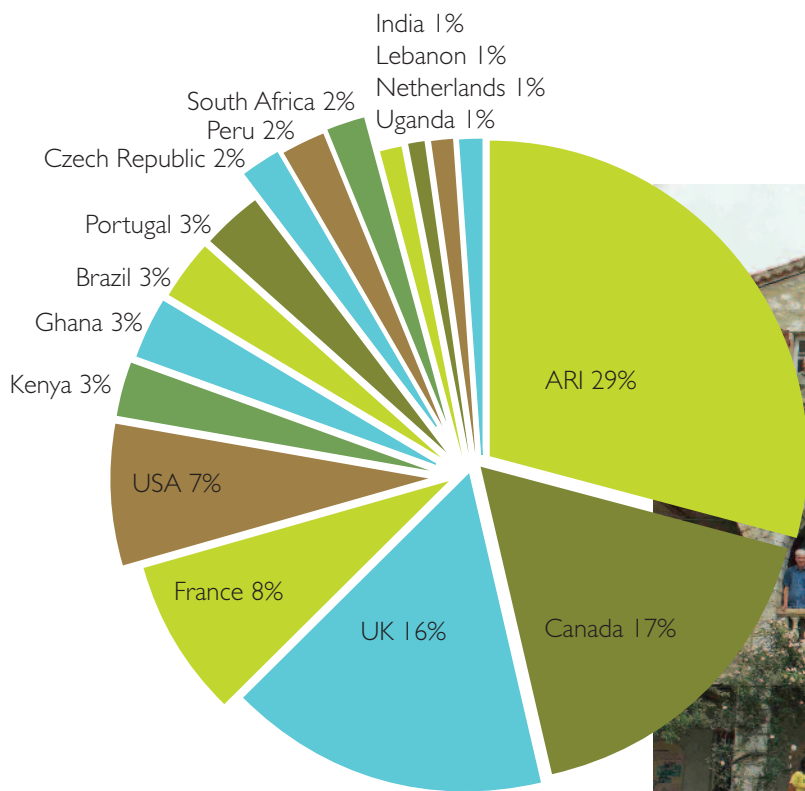
Conservation of the remnant populations is hampered by a severe lack of data, so during 2009 and 2010, A Rocha Ghana undertook systematic, standardised surveys in 14 areas of the Bia Goaso rainforests of SW Ghana, a region of some 5,000 km². The primary aim was to determine the numbers and distribution of Chimpanzees, as well as other primates, and identify the most important sites for their survival. Following a preliminary period of reconnaissance and interviews with people living and working in the forest, two major surveys were undertaken: one in the wet season, the other in the dry season. Three teams of three people used existing trails so that they could move stealthily and maximise their direct encounters with the animals. They also cut 129 straight line transects, 1 km in length: this is a noisy, slow process, but is better for finding signs, such as chimp nests, footprints, dung and food remains.

The survey indicated that there is still a small and scattered population of between 250 and 385 Chimpanzees in the study area. It identified key areas and shows how the existing network of Chimpanzee conservation sites could be improved by adding a corridor between the forests with the highest population densities. Recommendations have been made to reduce poaching and to provide strategically located water holes for use in the dry season. Since the Bia Goaso forests are part of a much more extensive patchwork of forest extending across the border into Côte d'Ivoire, the A Rocha Ghana team is also initiating collaborative projects with the Ivorian government, designed to halt the decline in Chimpanzees and Forest Elephants *Loxodonta cyclotis* across the region.

A young Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes*. (© Anup Shah/naturepl.com)



Financial Review 2010



Percentage of Global Income 2010



The Leaders' Forum took place at the A Rocha France centre near Nice. (Dan Tay)

A Rocha's Global Income & Expenditure

We are grateful to be able to report that A Rocha's global income has continued to grow: from £2.8 million in 2009 to just over £3 million* in 2010. The chart shows income received by A Rocha International and each National Organization (except those whose income is under £15,000: Bulgaria, Finland, New Zealand and Switzerland).

A Rocha International supports all the National Organizations in three key areas: by providing leadership and training programmes, by publicising the work at an international level and by fostering the emergence of new A Rocha initiatives.

During 2010 A Rocha International also saw significant growth in its income due to a small number of highly committed donors. Because of this:

- We made substantial grants to the National Organizations, funding key leadership posts in ten countries, totalling £249,500, targeted to increase their own ability to raise funds and undertake community conservation projects.
- Each of the Directors visited National Teams to give support and training. Our Director of Finance and our Director of Science and Conservation provided training in Ghana and Kenya; our Director of Development worked closely with

colleagues in Canada and the USA; whilst our Executive Director visited the Czech Republic, Lebanon and France.

- The Leaders' Forum in June 2010 brought together our International Trustees, International Team and over 50 A Rocha leaders from around the world for consultations, teaching and the exchange of best practice.

We are deeply grateful to all our donor partners around the world – whether churches, individuals, corporations, governments and/or institutions – for your on-going support and financial investment. We could not do the work without you!

While our overall income over the last year was up, individual and church support was down. Trends continue to show that the economy is still striving to recover. Meanwhile, we are looking for ways to communicate more effectively with our supporters about our specific needs and how your financial support can make a difference.

* These figures are based on management accounts as audited accounts for all National Organizations were not available at the time of going to press. The National Organizations are separate, independent legal entities. Their income is combined here to show the progress of the A Rocha family as a whole.

International Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for safeguarding the values that underlie A Rocha's mission and maintaining the integrity of the A Rocha family:

Prof Sir Ghilleen Prance, Chair

Dr Paul Kariya

Ian Marlow

Steve Beck

Sarah French

Paul Jeanson

Gerry Rawcliffe

Dr Stella Simiyu

The two newest Trustees are Rodney Green and Rebecca Irvin:



(Melissa Ong)

Rodney Green read Law and Theology at Cambridge University and has an Honorary LLD from De Montfort University for services to the community. He was Chief Executive of Leicester City Council from 1996 - 2008, during which time Leicester became the first European Sustainable City. Leicester is the UK's most ethnically diverse city and Rodney was appointed by the government to the Migration Impacts Forum to lead aspects of work designed to improve the integration of new arrivals into our communities. Born in Karachi, he has lived in Thailand, Aden and Ethiopia.

Rebecca Irvin gained a BA in political science and modern languages, and a Masters in international history and politics, then worked as a journalist before becoming deputy head of communications at the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. She now heads Rolex's global philanthropy, including the Rolex Awards for Enterprise, a corporate programme that supports innovative people and projects in science, exploration, the environment, cultural heritage and technology, as well as the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative which supports rising young artists by pairing them with established masters for a year of creative collaboration in dance, film, literature, music, theatre and visual arts.



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What our partners say

Donors form the backbone of any charity and so we asked a few of our partners to tell us why they choose to support A Rocha.

In October 2010, KPMG worked with A Rocha to develop a 'Global Green Expedition' for KPMG people; bringing together select employees for a one-week program focused on leadership and environmental stewardship, hosted at an A Rocha field study centre.

Megan Haskell, Manager of KPMG's Global Green Initiative, reports on the pilot program:



Lim Jit Cheng and the other KPMG employees participated in early morning bird ringing in the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. (Angela McKay)



'Six professionals from KPMG firms in Brazil, Denmark, Malaysia and the USA traveled to Mwamba, the A Rocha center in Kenya, to learn about the ASSETS Eco-bursary program and the work to preserve the endangered Spotted Ground Thrush *Turdus fischeri*. The group also spent time developing an awareness of the effects of climate change and human activity on the Kenyan coastal ecosystems. The trip was designed to develop 'Global Green Ambassadors' for KPMG, empowering participants with additional knowledge regarding the challenges of environmental sustainability and establishing them as advocates within their member firms and broader communities.'



'When the environment is degraded, it's the poorest communities who suffer most. Millions of people depend on their surroundings for water, food and fuel. So we're excited to be partnering with A Rocha, bringing health and hope to some of our neediest neighbours.'



'We're pleased to support A Rocha because they clearly articulate a thorough Biblical basis to their work and do a great job of integrating creation care with other aspects of mission activity. We support A Rocha Uganda who combine practical research, environmental education and community transformation in the name of Christ.'

A Rocha International

3 Hooper St, Cambridge, CBI 2NZ, England. Tel: +44 (0)1387 710286 E-mail: international@arocha.org www.arocha.org

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