



## Accelerated Restoration Collaborative

[www.arcrestoration.org](http://www.arcrestoration.org)

### **Madagascar, Antsanitia Coastal Restoration and Ecolodge Project Conservation and Project Plan Update**

#### **1. Context / Objective**

The project is a large-scale landscape restoration and conservation initiative in partnership with ARC, RIR, and DREDD, supported by four dedicated stakeholders. Its goal is to empower, educate, and employ local communities as guardians of the forests and ecosystems that make Antsanitia unique, while reducing the economic pressures that drive unsustainable forest use.

- Building a model of conservation rooted in community empowerment
- Creating sustainable livelihoods where stable income is otherwise rare
- Protecting one of Madagascar's most threatened coastal forest ecosystems

#### **2. Current Actions**

Over the past year, we have combined community leadership and strong enforcement to reduce illegal forest use. Through VOIs ("People who love the forest"), financed forest guards, and ongoing awareness campaigns, we are building a culture of stewardship that values long-term sustainability over short-term exploitation.

- Strengthening and expanding VOIs as active forest stewards
- Equipping and funding DREDD guards with the authority to act
- Engaging villages in education and awareness sessions
- Disrupting illegal charcoal and timber operations before they escalate

#### **3. Progress & Observations**

The results are clear: charcoal production in Antsanitia has dropped dramatically, communities are increasingly engaged in protection, and illegal activity is being addressed quickly and decisively. Trust and collaboration between local residents and enforcement teams are helping secure lasting change.

- Noticeable decline in charcoal production compared to last year
- Illegal charcoal pits identified, shut down, and monitored
- Successful detainment of repeat offenders under the three-strikes policy
- Stronger community participation in forest monitoring and reporting

#### **4. Policy**

Our enforcement policy balances compassion with accountability. Recognizing the poverty that drives

illegal activity, the three-strikes framework allows for education and rehabilitation before legal penalties are applied, while ensuring the forests and communities remain protected.

- **First offense:** Warning plus education on forest laws
- **Second offense:** Constructive community service that benefits the village
- **Third offense:** Imprisonment as a last resort for persistent offenders
- Compassionate but firm enforcement that protects both people and forests
- Direct oversight from DREDD guards to ensure transparency and fairness

## 5. Plans

Looking ahead, we will strengthen our presence across the landscape and give communities more tools to lead conservation efforts themselves. With stronger checkpoints, more VOIs, and deeper collaboration, we are setting the foundation for a forest that thrives for generations.

- Constructing and securing checkpoints to block forest exploitation routes
- Expanding VOIs into new communities to broaden protection networks
- Scaling both active patrols and passive monitoring across priority zones
- Continuing joint strategy development with ARC, RIR, and DREDD

## 6. Closing Statement

Please also view the album below which provides some media relating to the first full year of operation in Antsanitia since ARC and RIR assumed project responsibility. Please note that due to complications from previous project implementing organizations there was a gap in coverage which did allow for a small timeframe where forest poaching increased. This has been turned around and will continue to improve as ARC, RIR, and DREDD continue to implement and expand on project implementation goals and benchmarks for success. Thank you!

[Antsanitia Coastal Restoration and Ec lodge Project - Forest Conservation, Protection, and Enforcement Album](#)

We would also like to include this album as a thank you for your support. It is outside of forest guarding and conservation, however it is a part of the project Grow For It and its supporters make possible.

[Madagascar, Antsanitia Coastal Restoration Project - 2024 - 2025 Walkthrough Album](#)

ARC