

Newsletter

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Society news

The last Society meeting for 2019 was the daytime event on 19th October with talks by entomologist Ashley Leftwich linking the flora and fauna of India with Madagascar, by the Chevening scholars Miora Rakotoarimanana on the promotion of an inclusive agricultural value chain and Lovatiana Rakotoniaina on her study of improving diabetes care on the island, and by Tiffany Coates on her three-month motorcycle tour of the country.

The proposed dates for the meetings in 2020 are the evenings of Thursday 2nd April and Wednesday 24th June then a daytime event on Saturday 19th October.

Details of this event and other are on our website at www.anglo-malagasysociety.co.uk and on Facebook. The website also has a summary of some of the previous talks for those unable to attend, together with much other useful information. This includes directions to the venue for our meetings, which is the Upper Vestry Hall of St George's Church, Bloomsbury, London WC1A 2HR, which is two minutes' walk from the British Museum.

The next newsletter will be published in March 2020. Please send any material for inclusion as well as any changes in your contact details to the editor Julian Cooke, whose e-mail address is juliancooke@yahoo.co.uk.

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Politics in Madagascar

Madagascar has held its latest round of elections, on 27th November, which saw President Andry Rajoelina's party look to take control of the capital and dominate the overall results.

In early October there was continued debate over the government's decision at the end of September to appoint interim governors in eleven of the twenty-three regions, granting each a budget of 1bn ariary (approx. £200,000) to carry out essential works over a three-month period. The former president Marc Ravalomanana appealed to the Haute Cour Constitutionnelle (HCC), which in a judgment at the end of November said the move was legal and acceptable as a temporary measure.

Christine Razanamahasoa, the president of the National Assembly, introduced a proposed change in its structure in mid-October which would see a new entity review the parliamentary immunity for deputies facing court cases: two were currently in jail pending a trial. The new permanent commission was put in place at the end of the month, led by the deputy Lucien Rakotomala and comprising fifteen members: eleven from the IRD (*Isika rehetra distrika miaraka amin'ny prezida Andry Rajoelina*), the government party, and two each from Ravalomanana's TIM party and the Groupe des Parlementaires Républicains (GPR).



In October there was some considerable attention on the Iles Eparses, prompted by the intended visit by President Emmanuel Macron of France to Ile Glorieuse, the largest of the islets in the group. It would be the first such visit by a French leader if a brief one tied in to a trip to Mayotte and La Réunion, as well as being one organised in association with the Malagasy authorities, with a focus on the environment. Macron announced that the area would become a

national natural reserve in 2020 and said that France's presence had helped to avoid the despoliation of the ocean; he said that he saw France as a partner rather than a rival to other counties. He also noted an intention to work with Madagascar on a plan for durable development there. The move was seen as a step by France to assert control of islands that, while only 7 square kilometres in themselves, gave it an exclusive economic zone of some 640,000 sq km. The new French ambassador to Madagascar, Christophe Bouchard, said there was no date fixed as yet for a meeting of the joint commission set up in 2016 to oversee the islands. Andry Rajoelina reacted to the visit by saying that there would be a review meeting on 16th November as intimated during his visit to Paris in May while the prime minister Christian Ntsay said there would be a national consultation in December on the subject.

Later in October Rajoelina was one of many heads of state to attend a first Russia-Africa summit in Sochi. Russian plans for further economic cooperation followed the indications that it had interfered in the presidential election in Madagascar in 2018, while Rajoelina's team spoke of Russia as a potential strategic partner. A Chinese delegation led by a deputy prime minister visited Madagascar in early November in what was described as a mission to consolidate co-operation between the two countries. There were more details later in the month, in a report in the New York Times, on how Russia had been involved in the presidential elections trying to support first Hery Rajaonarimampianina then Rajoelina; the businessman Yevgeny Prigozhin was reported to have been involved, as in the US elections in 2016. In late December the Indian government appointed a defence attaché to join its mission to Madagascar; three ships from the Indian Navy's First Training Squadron undertook a three-day visit to Antsiranana at the beginning of October and an Indian Coast Guard ship called into Toamasina on 23rd December on a goodwill visit.

The campaign for the municipal elections opened on 5th November when the electoral commission CENI called again for good conduct and said it would be uncompromising in its dealing with bribery. A fortnight into the campaign the commission noted that to date the campaign had proceeded calmly if with a number of irregularities or shortcomings, including the delay from three-quarters of candidates in submitting details of their assets. The Norwegian government again gave financial support through SACEM, which promotes elections aiming to be credible, transparent, peaceful and inclusive; this took its total contribution to \$1.5m since 2018.

Ravalomanana's TIM party lost the support of a number of backers in particular in the capital. They seemed to favour Naina Andriantsitohaina, a former minister of foreign affairs who stood for the IRK platform backing Rajoelina, over TIM's own candidate Rina Randriamasinoro, who unlike three of the other four candidates did not sign a charter of good conduct. The contest for the capital was a prime focus, to take over from Lalao Ravalomanana; Ravalomanana himself had been elected mayor in 2001 as had Rajoelina in 2007.

Christian Ntsay, the prime minister and also minister of foreign affairs, led the Malagasy delegation on the Iles Eparses which included Professor Raymond Ranjeva, the former vice-president of the International Court of Justice (and a Society member) as well as Dr Djacoba Liva Tehindrazanarivelo. The French delegation was led by Marcel Escure, the ambassador responsible for regional co-operation in the Indian Ocean. The meeting disagreed over the sovereignty of the islands and reviewed the scope for joint administration, which in itself was not popular; there were protests outside the Andafiavaratra Palace where the conference was held.

On 22nd November the Senate rejected an amendment on the formal status of the opposition in parliament, proposed by Brunelle Razafitsindraofa and approved by it in August. This would preclude anyone who was not a deputy from leading such opposition, which would invalidate Ravalomanana's claim to do so.



Participation in the elections on 27th November was modest, with only a third of the electorate voting and only a fifth doing so in the capital. The initial results favoured IRK, ahead of TIM and the MMM (Malagasy Miara-Miainga) led by Hajo Andrianainarivelo. Naina Andriantsitohaina was reported to have won in Antananarivo, if by a very small margin, which would be the first time since the country's independence that the capital had voted for a pro-régime candidate. Representatives of TIM criticised the role of CENI in its handling of the electoral list. The HVM party of former president Hery Rajaonarimampianina also called for a judicial inquiry into alleged fraud, while the opposition were reported to be preparing a series of protests.

Meanwhile the cases of five former ministers were under review at the Haute Cour de Justice (HCJ) for alleged corruption; Rivo Rakotovao, the Senate president, claimed they had been politically motivated. At the end of November the National Assembly voted to release from

detention two deputies, Hasimpirenena Rasolompionona and Ludovic Raveloson, who had been implicated in corruption over the sale of the Villa Elisabeth in Ivandry in 2014 and in rosewood logging in 2017. In December a number of organisations, including the Alliance Voahary Gasy and Transparency International-Initiative Madagascar (TI-IM) sent an open letter to the President, the Minister of Justice, the president of the National Assembly and the president of the HCC denouncing plans to free Raveloson. The anti-corruption body, the Pôle Anti-Corruption (PAC), rejected a letter from the Assembly's special commission demanding the suspension on the charges against Rasolomampionona, on the basis that they related to events before he was elected. In early December also the HCJ finally came into full effect with the election of two parliamentarians. The PAC's court sentenced the businesswoman Claudine Razaimamonjy as well as Houssen Abdullah, formerly of the Ministry of the Interior, to ten years of hard labour for their misappropriation of funds, the latter in absentia.

While the Senate objected to the government's budget for 2020, the Loi des Finances, which the National Assembly had passed at the end of November, the HCC ruled on 20th December that it was in line with the constitution and should proceed. The municipal elections themselves had caused a delay in the process of approval, which was then given in a single reading over three days with no amendments. The Senate had limited time to review the bill ahead of the end of the parliamentary session on 15th December while Rivo Rakotovoao, its president, said it should do meticulously; he cited a lack of transparency while he was battling too to preserve the status of the upper house, which Rajoelina had threatened to dissolve and the budget for which was much reduced. Members of civil society also criticised the lack of detail on the substantial amount allocated to unspecified investment which accounted for 8% of the total spending. The Senate passed the bill after a lively debate if with eight amendments, including restoring the state subsidy to JIRAMA and an increase in its own budget.

In early December the eleven new regional governors undertook two weeks' training in China, while twelve new governors were due to be appointed: the number of regions would increase with the splitting into two of Vatovavy-Fitovinany, Mananjary becoming principal town of the first part and Manakara for Fitovavy.

The issue of the Iles Eparses was the topic for a three-day gathering intended as a consultation on national opinion which was held from 4th December at the Ivato conference centre. While the event was taking place President Macron was on Twitter to announce plans by France to open a new research station on the islands the following year. President Rajoelina said on 10th December that there could be no basis for further negotiation if France did not cede sovereignty while the authorities proposed Malagasy names for the main islands: Sambatra (Glorieuses), Kely (Juan de Nova), Bedimaky (Bassa da India) and Ampela (Europa).

On 9th December Marc Ravalomanana and Hery Rajaonarimampianina met in Paris, the latter having flown from Canada where he now had a teaching role; there were no details on the discussions although the two former presidents later issued a communiqué denouncing alleged fraud in the recent elections, including the manipulation of electoral lists and the use of false identity documents. They did also note their continued commitment to the process of national reconciliation. On the 10th the Senate rejected the proposed statute on the structure of the opposition.

In mid-December Andry Rajoelina said that cleaning up the capital was a national priority, while control of the rubbish collection company, SAMVA, was moved to the mayor away from the Ministry of Energy, Water and Hydrocarbons to which Ravalomanana had moved it after Rajoelina's election in 2008. The lack of control had been a challenge to Lalao Ravalomanana while Rajoelina looked to pay a debt to the capital with the promise of more rubbish trucks and higher wages for their operators.

The unsuccessful TIM candidate Randriamasinoro also mobilised opposition to the proposed new town to be known as Tana-Masoandro, which a poll indicated had the support of 81% of the capital's population although it met opposition from those directly affected; the state had set aside \$20m to compensate 337 families over 700 plots of land. The ambitious project is intended to house all government ministries, the Senate, a university, a conference centre, hotels and homes for 100,000 people at a cost of some \$600 million; construction is scheduled to be completed by 2024.

The opposition parties attempted to arrange a series of protests in the capital in late December. The forces of law and order prevented one from reaching the Ministry of Justice, with instead Randriamasinoro allowed to send in a delegation of eight to make a deposition; the prefect for Antananarivo said the Christmas market was the reason for banning protests.

The official results of the election are due to be published by 14th January.

Economic and social matters

Finance and aid

The World Bank has indicated that Madagascar's economy grew at an estimated 4.7% in 2019 given weaker external demand and some disruption to spending from the presidential and parliamentary elections. This would be slower than the rate of 5.1% reached in 2018, its fastest pace in over a decade, although the Bank said it expected a post-election boost in public and private investments to result in growth averaging 5.4% in 2020-21.

The government's own budget for 2020 forecast 5.5% growth in 2020 against an estimated 5.2% in 2019. The emphasis was on infrastructure investment. Other measures included an increase in the excise duty on each litre of beer of 600 ariary, which was expected to raise 20bn ariary a year, while an increase of 1,390 ariary in duty per packet of cigarettes might raise 15bn.

At the beginning of October the European Union announced the release of a further €8m under its 11th programme of the Fonds Européens de Développement (FED). It also started negotiations with five Eastern and Southern Africa partners known as ESA (the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Zimbabwe) to build on an existing Economic Partnership Agreement which has been running for eight years, in which time exports to the EU rose by almost a quarter to €2.8bn in 2018.

The Fondation Andry Rajoelina, set-up by the president but run separately from him, was expected to finance a new university, where teaching would be free, and a pharmaceutical plant that would produce nutritional supplements.

In November the IMF noted that there had been progress in dealing with the issues at the energy utility JIRAMA, which included the renegotiation of contracts with electricity suppliers and the adjustment to state subsidies. However, President Rajoelina had to step in that month to address continued power outages and water shortages in the capital.

The World Bank offered \$83m to finance improvements to the RN44 between Moramanga and Ambatondrazaka; the state had initially financed works. This was part of a wider amount of \$140m intended to enhance transport connectivity in selected rural areas in priority regions of Alaotra Mangoro, Anosy and Atsimo-Atsinanana including 35km of the RNS12A and building a new Manambondro bridge on it to replace the existing ferry crossing.

In November for the first time the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation committed funds to Madagascar, providing \$35m which was earmarked for sugar plants at Mahajanga and Tolagnaro as well as power stations in the Bongolava and Sava regions. Lantsoa Rakotomalala, the Minister for Industry and Commerce, also noted the scope for Chinese co-operation in the development of four new industrial zones.

Madagascar remained in 161st place out of 190 countries in the World Bank's survey *Doing Business* for 2019, although its score slipped a little from 48.84 to 47.7.

In spite of the focus on corruption as of October only two of the 151 deputies elected in July had provided the details of their assets as required.

The Pôle Anti-Corruption handled 40 incidents of money-laundering in 2019, up fourfold on the previous year, with an estimated value of 400bn ariary (c. £84m).

Health

In November the United Nations Family Planning Agency (UNFPA) addressed the challenges on sexual health issues in Madagascar as well as the implications for development in a country in which the population was growing by some 500,000 a year. It noted the increased use of contraception. Milay Rajoelina, an ambassador for the agency, called for an end to the silence over violence against women. In December the combined parliament finally approved a law punishing acts of violence of a sexual nature.

There were a number of incidents of plague as the new season started.

A study conducted by Transparency International and financed by the EU found that nearly 65% of Malagasy had faced corruption in medical matters.

The Global Hunger Index for 2019 described the situation in Madagascar as alarming, alongside Zambia, Chad, Yemen and the Central African Republic. The country was ranked 114th out of 117 if similar to 116th out of 119 in 2018. The assessment was based on malnutrition, emaciation in children, retarded growth and infant mortality.

The country's strategic plan to combat HIV/AIDS was reported in December to have a shortfall in financing at \$99m against the \$130m budgeted through to 2022.

Education

In November UNICEF noted that over a period of thirty years more children in Madagascar had gained access to education but that its quality had fallen, not helped by some absenteeism amongst teachers, the level of which was estimated to be 30%.

Another factor has been children at work rather than at school. A year-long investigation by Terre des Hommes Netherlands found that at least 11,000 children between the ages of five and 17 were employed in quarrying and processing mica, a report which raised questions for the automotive and electronics industry. The Guardian carried an article at <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/nov/21/children-as-young-as-five-make-up-most-of-madagascars-mica-mining-workforce>.

Agriculture

In November Andry Rajoelina announced plans for Madagascar to try to reach self-sufficiency in rice production during the launch of the 2019-20 season. He cited work to improve seeds and to repair paddy fields. China offered to provide a first batch of 100 tonnes out of 300 tonnes of hybrid seeds, which had the capacity to yield eight tonnes of rice per hectare, some three times the current average. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network indicated in December that imports of rice were expected to stabilise at 30-40,000 tonnes per month during the lean season as substantial quantities had already arrived; it expected total imports to be 400,000 tonnes in the 2019/2020 year, similar to that in 2018/2019 if 10% above the five-year average.

The vanilla market was reported in November to have become a buyer's one for the first time in four seasons, with prices about a third lower than a recent peak price of \$600 per kilogram, according to a report by the Canadian importer Aust & Hachmann Ltd.

The agreement between Madagascar and the European Union on fishing around the island which expired at the end of 2018 has yet to be renewed, with negotiations in December proving inconclusive. The agreement allowed 40 trawlers and 54 long-line boats to fish within twenty nautical miles of the coast, by which the Malagasy state earned €6.1m in the period 2015-2018; the sticking point was the scope for the boats to self-declare catches while the issue of the recent deal on Chinese fishing boats rankled. A meeting in Brussels is set for 19th-21st January.

The BBC Radio 4 programme From Our Own Correspondent in early October had a report by Emilie Filou on the benefits of crickets in a Malagasy diet; the link to the broadcast is at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csy6nc>.

Cyclone

Nine people were reported to have been killed when Cyclone Belna hit the coastal town of Soalala in Boeny district with winds of nearly 100mph. It was the first storm of the season to

make landfall in the Indian Ocean. More than 1,400 residents were homeless as a result. The cyclone continued southwards along the western coast of Madagascar but as it weakened did not cause further significant damage.

Insecurity

The incidents of bandit attacks, summary justice and kidnappings continued through the last quarter of the year. They included an armed attack on a transport convoy in Betroka on 25th December, part of a litany of incidents over the festive period

The prime minister, Christian Ntsay, and a United Nations co-ordinator, Violet Kakyomya, held a meeting in November with various backers which covered the fight against corruption, support for the south of the country, the prevention of violence and insecurity. Christian Ntsay noted the actions the government had taken; he said it planned to spend the equivalent of \$7.5m in the period 2020-22 following \$11m to date.

Prisons

In early November Andry Rajoelina, accompanied by his wife Mialy and the justice minister, Jacques Randrianasolo, made a visit to the prison in Antanimora, one designed for 800 inmates but then holding 4,357 of whom 2,462 still awaited trial. Amnesty International welcomed the visit, the first by a president since the country's independence, and there was a reduction in the proportion of those detained by the end of the month. The prisons at Moramanga and Antalaha were reported to suffer the worst over-crowding, with ten times more inmates than their due capacity.

Energy

In October in Paris various partners signed an agreement to co-develop a hydropower plant by acquiring equity in Compagnie Générale d'Hydroélectricité de Volobe (CGHV), the company running the Volobe project on the River Ivandro its shareholders would be the local industrial company Jovena (40%), a pan-African infrastructure company Africa50 (25%), SN Power (25%) and Colas (10%). The project is expected to create up to 1,000 direct jobs during the construction phase and the plant is due to open by 2023. The Egyptian company ElSewedy Electric announced in October that its subsidiary Iskraemeco-Egypt had signed a \$36.7 million contract to supply 485,000 pre-paid meters to JIRAMA over a period of three years.

In December the African Development Bank (AfDB) approved a partial guarantee of \$100m for the development of the 205MW Sahofika hydropower project. Filatex announced a 50MW solar energy project in Madagascar in partnership with Canada's DERA Energy funded with bank debt and equity financing of \$50m; the project is expected to provide electricity to some one million people in four cities by the end of 2020 and to enable JIRAMA to reduce its prices by up to 40%. The company also announced plans to invest \$150m in 2020 to enter the market in Ghana, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritius.

In December Vonjy Andriamanga, a former energy minister, was appointed as the new head of JIRAMA.

Business

The Moroccan Banque Centrale Populaire (BCP) was reported to have acquired a 71% stake in Banque de Madagascar et de l'Océan Indien (BMOI) from the French group BPCE.

The BBC had a report on Chocolaterie Robert including an interview with its CEO, Marcel Ramanandraibe; the report is at <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/business-50674404/chocolate-from-the-bean-to-the-gift-bag>. Madécasse, the American company that makes single-origin chocolate bars has re-branded as Beyond Good.

In early December the government signed a deal worth \$47m with the Chinese government to help to install 130km of fibre-optic connections and to set up data management centres, if also to provide CCTV in the capital and the port of Toamasina. Telma had signed an agreement in July with Ericsson worth \$100m to upgrade its network in the period 2019-23, which was publicised in October.

Tourism

Work started in September on rehabilitating the Pangalanes Canal, intended to boost the regional economy through tourism. Andry Rajoelina started the project inaugurating a new dredger worth 3bn ariary (c £0.6m). In early October he went in person to the airport at Ivato in response to continued concerns over security and corruption. The following week two policemen based there were arrested and charged with corruption.

In October Air Madagascar was reported to be ready to take on three new Airbus A220 jet aircraft, as with its partner Air Austral, although the financing was not clear. The sacking in December of Besoa Razafimaharo as CEO of the airline was seen as a further sign of a rupture between the national flag carrier and Air Austral, which had as yet only committed \$10m of the \$35m pledged as part of its taking a large minority stake.



The new ecotourism Black Lemur Camp won the award for the *Best Wider World Tourism Project* at the *British Guild of Travel Writers Awards* held in London. The operator Fanamby's president Serge Rajaobelina accept the award, for which it had been nominated by Hilary Bradt.

Minerals and mining

In November the Malagasy government suspended indefinitely ilmenite mining by the Australian company Base Resources at Toliara, said to be the third-largest mining project in Madagascar. It cited friction between the project and local communities as well as a lack of

clarity over the potential benefits of the operation. The government had issued a mining license in 2012 and an environmental permit in 2015; Base Resources had planned to commence construction activities this year and enter production by the second half of 2021.

The government also called for an audit into the ilmenite mine operated by QMM, in which it is a 20% shareholder alongside the Canadian subsidiary of Rio Tinto. The company was reported to need a third injection of capital since 2012, this time for \$16m; the state had borrowed funds from the company for the two previous ones. The mine faces continued concern over its impact on the environment: a study by a specialist Dr Steven Emerman, commissioned by the Andrew Lees Trust and reported in December, found that water supplies downstream of the mine had concentrations of uranium that were 350 times higher and of lead nearly ten times higher than upstream of it.

In December Madagascar announced plans to increase its royalties on mining from 2% to 4%. The proposed law, as reported by Reuters and confirmed by the Minister of Mines Fidiniavo Ravokatra, proposed a government stake of at least 20% in any marketable mining production. Royalties would rise to 8% from 2% for raw precious stones. Rough industrial stones would attract a 6% royalty rate while cut industrial stones would be taxed at 3%. Madagascar's mining chamber sharply criticised the proposal, saying the changes would halt new investment and endanger existing mining operations in the country.

The national branch of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) published a delayed report for 2017 and one for 2019, although its secretary-general Daniella Randriafeno resigned citing the lack of government motivation on the issue. According to the reports the government receipts were 159bn ariary (c £33.5m) in 2017 and then 231bn in 2018 from those firms participating.

Wildlife and conservation

Forests and protected areas

Alexandre Georget, the Minister of the Environment, said in November that 14m hectares of forest had been lost to bush fires in the sixty years since Madagascar's independence.

Research published in *Nature Climate Change* calculated that the amount of suitable habitat for black-and-white ruffed and red-ruffed lemurs would decline by between 38% and 95% by 2070, as a result of climate change and deforestation. As these two species dwell exclusively in large trees, their populations fall quickly when rainforests are logged or fragmented..

There have been some doubts raised over President Rajoelina's declaration in March at the One Planet summit in Nairobi that Madagascar would reforest at least 40,000 hectares every year for the next five years, including a plan to mark the 60th year of independence in 2020 in planting 60 million seedlings in one day on 19th January. There is a danger that the target would be met through fast-growing invasive tree species such as pine, eucalyptus and acacia. In the meantime the Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium in Omaha reported it had planted its three

millionth tree in Madagascar. In December Liège Airport committed to plant 600,000 trees over the next five years in association with the Belgian NGO Graine de vie, as part of a move to offset CO2 emissions.

Species

In October scientists described a new species of leaf-tailed gecko *Uroplatus fetsy* believed to be found only in Madagascar's Ankarana Special Reserve and named after its apparently sly look. Mark Scherz explained that the species was discovered some time ago, but it had taken time to collect sufficient individuals. The authors of the paper describing the new species say it could warrant endangered status on the IUCN Red List because of threats to its habitat. The citation in the journal *Zootaxa* is Ratsoavina, F. M., Scherz, M. D., Tolley, K. A., Raselimanana, A. P., Glaw, F., & Vences, M. (2019). A new species of *Uroplatus* (Gekkonidae) from Ankarana National Park, Madagascar, of remarkably high genetic divergence. *Zootaxa*, 4683(1), 84-96. doi:[10.11646/zootaxa.4683.1.4](https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.4683.1.4)

A species of carnivorous dinosaur that once roamed Madagascar 70 million years ago was so tough on its teeth that they needed to be replaced frequently, according to a new study. *Majungasaurus* had to replace its mouth full of teeth about every two months, growing replacements in each socket anywhere from two to 13 times faster than other meat-eating dinosaurs, the researchers found. The study was published in the journal PLOS ONE.

The Mongabay website had a lengthy report on the threat to domestic fishing from overseas even before a new deal with China were agreed; there are details at <https://news.mongabay.com/2019/10/madagascar-opaque-foreign-fisheries-deals-leave-empty-nets-at-home/>.

A team of researchers has confirmed that humans arrived on Madagascar about 11,000 years ago, much earlier than commonly accepted estimates of 2,000 years. Kristina Douglass, an assistant professor of anthropology in the College of the Liberal Arts and her team, collected all of the radiocarbon dates that generated for archaeological sites on the island. The paper was published in *Quaternary Science Reviews* (DOI: [10.1016/j.quascirev.2019.105878](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2019.105878)).

Charities and NGOs

In October the new website for Money for Madagascar went live; you can visit it at <https://moneyformadagascar.org/> with its feature photos, reports from all their projects and links to videos to help to show the difference gifts make.

Four Polish doctors from the Polish Foundation for Africa brought medical assistance to over 3,000 inhabitants of Mampikony to help people suffering from leprosy during a two-week mission, when the doctors also examined patients for symptoms of malaria, tuberculosis and bilharzia, treated them, and distributed medicine and nearly 1,000 pairs of spectacles.

ITV News carried a feature on Emma Gibbons, the executive director of Reef Doctor, which carries out conservation and social development in south-west Madagascar, covering how work over two decades since first visiting Madagascar as a young marine biologist. The report is at <https://www.itv.com/news/2019-10-23/madagascar-reef-doctor-dr-emma-gibson-itv-news/>.

WaterAid introduced supporters to a family in Madagascar as part of a '360-degree interactive digital experience' planned to raise £2m this winter to bring clean water to 12,000 people in the district of Manjakandriana. There is a link at <https://360.wateraid.org/>.

Mary's Meals, the school-feeding charity, has expanded its work in Madagascar to reach an additional 9,231 hungry schoolchildren in association with Feedback Madagascar, a charity also based in Argyll.

Events



The European seniors' tour held their first tournament in Madagascar at the International Golf Club du Rova, Andakana on 29th November-1st December. The event was won by the Englishman Barry Lane with Jean Baptiste Ramarozatovo in equal seventh place.