

THE ALDABRA CLEAN-UP PROJECT



Tackling ocean plastic pollution through action, education and research



'ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST
SURVIVING NATURAL TREASURES'
(SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH)

Who are we?

The Seychelles Island Foundation (SIF), a public trust that manages and protects Seychelles' two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Aldabra Atoll (Aldabra) and the Vallée de Mai. Trustees include Sir Tim Smit, founder of The Eden Project and Dr Lindsay Turnbull, Biological Sciences Fellow at The Queen's College, University of Oxford. SIF maintains a small research team on Aldabra, the only people who live (temporarily) on the atoll.

Six young Seychellois volunteers chosen from the general public through a national video competition will travel to Aldabra to visit this almost inaccessible place. As such, these volunteers will not only have a life changing experience, but also be part of Aldabra's rescue from marine plastic pollution.

Six young conservationists from the UK, France and Belgium: four from The Queen's College and one from each of Jesus College and Merton College, at the University of Oxford. are graduate students in biological and materials sciences. April Burt is the Project Lead: prior coming to Oxford, she managed the research team on Aldabra and specialised in marine and terrestrial habitat monitoring and conservation.

Media Partners and Corporate Sponsors will share our story, the catastrophic effects of plastic pollution and the immediate and effective action individuals can take to reduce the amount of single use plastic used in the Seychelles and globally.

Schools, community groups and individual supporters will be able to follow our activities and communicate with us on Aldabra as well as taking personal, individual pledges and actions that we will share through our social media channels and media partners.



Photos: SIF



Photos: Janske Van De Crommenacker

What is special about Aldabra?

Aldabra is the world's second-largest coral atoll (150 square miles including lagoon) and isolated from the nearest landmass (Africa) by hundreds of miles.

Aldabra is almost pristine, or at least it was forty years ago. A ring of islands surrounds a central turquoise lagoon, the tidal heartbeat of the atoll, with millions of tonnes of water rushing in and out, twice every day. Aldabra's geographical isolation, rough terrain and scarcity of fresh water have deterred large human populations from settling, which means until now the atoll has been protected from people's lifestyles and behaviours.

Aldabra's is a rich and diverse ecosystem in which evolutionary processes are active due to minimal human interference. It is part of a global biodiversity hotspot, home to:

- the world's largest population of giant tortoises, the longest-lived died at the age of 250! These tortoises are now eating flip-flops; we find them in their faeces
- a pristine marine life: the presence of sharks indicates a healthy ecosystem: there are at least 10 species around Aldabra where they are protected and can grow to maturity
- the rail, the last flightless bird in the Indian Ocean region, along with thousands of rare and endangered seabirds – as many as 90% of these birds have plastic in their stomachs
- the largest population of nesting green turtles in the Western Indian Ocean
- an incredible variety of other species, some of which can only be found on Aldabra

Why must we act?

Only a small number of people have ever been to Aldabra, even fewer have spent more than a few hours there, yet the oceans carry thousands of tonnes of humanity's detritus to these beautiful shores, a visceral example of our destructive impact on this planet.

Aldabra belongs to us all, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, brought into our homes over the decades by generations of naturalists, most notably David Attenborough.

It is not too late to protect Aldabra, to retain it as a beacon for future generations and to use this project to explain and promote the urgent need for people across the world to demand change in the use of plastics.

Uninhabited as the atoll is, those of us who have been lucky enough to spend some time there must bring its plight to public attention and ask people to help create a solution for the future. **Please join us in doing so.**



Photos: Rich Baxter

What will we do?

We will charter a cargo vessel to Aldabra in March 2019 and stay for between three and five weeks, gathering as much plastic and marine debris as possible– from flip-flops to toothbrushes, fishing nets to water bottles – all to be taken back to Mahé, Seychelles' largest island, for proper processing.

Whilst undertaking the clean-up, we will endeavour to analyse the waste to identify where the plastic has come from and quantify just how much this place is impacted by humanity. We will keep a blog to regularly share our findings on our Twitter and Instagram pages, culminating in an academic report.

Both in the lead up to and following the March expedition, we will reach out to primary and secondary schools to engage and inspire young people to learn about Aldabra, minimise their use of plastic and support this project.

We will hold a variety of events both in the UK and Seychelles, to spread the word amongst different communities, and, with the help of our social media reach, encourage all to take action and cut down on their use of plastic.



What will it cost?

The project will cost **£150,000**:

- £80,000 to charter a cargo boat to collect and transport the waste 1,000 km from Aldabra to the main Seychelles, and
- £40,000 to get us to Aldabra: return flights to the Seychelles, a chartered plane to Assumption Island, and finally a boat to Aldabra.
- Once on the atoll, we will be living frugally, committing all our energy to clearing as much of the plastic and fishing debris as possible.
- Additional costs will go towards logistics and processing the trash.
- We have already secured £61,000 and look forward to raising the remaining funds by the autumn, to ensure we are able to commit to undertaking the project in March 2019.



Photo: Huw Cordey




Update 1
16th June 2018

532
Tonnes of
trash estimated
on Aldabra


489
Followers
on
Facebook

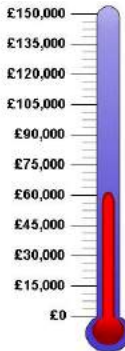
45 Project
funders
so far!


73 Brands
Identified so far
in Aldabra trash

How are we doing so far?

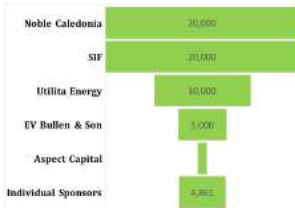
FUNDRAISING

Thus far



SPONSORSHIP

Corporate and Private



SILVER SPONSORS

Noble Caledonia



Noble Caledonia is the world's leading small ship cruising expert. They have been one of the main cruise ships to include Aldabra as a destination, enabling people from all around the world to glimpse Aldabra's wonders.

On their visits their guests embark on land tours, snorkel trips and a zodiac cruise through the famous lagoon.

Noble Caledonia was immediately onboard with our project to clean up Aldabra and are our first silver sponsors of the project!

EVB

EV Bullen are a mechanical and electrical building services, granted Her Majesty's Royal Warrant in 2004 and have generously sponsored our project.

Utilita Energy is Britain's leading supplier of Smart Pay As You Go Energy.

Having previously supported projects in Seychelles they are now a bronze sponsor of the Aldabra Clean Up Project!



'Many of us ask what can I, as a person, do, but history shows us that everything good and bad starts because somebody does something or does not do something'.

SYLVIA EARLE

PROJECT NEWS...

THE UK PROJECT LAUNCH

The Royal Society London



We officially launched the Aldabra Clean Up Project in the UK at the Royal Society in London. The event was attended by the Seychelles High Commissioner and the British High Commissioner to Seychelles (Derek Ally and Caron Rohsler), company representatives from Noble Caledonia, Sunbutter Oceans, Utilita Energy, EV Bullen & Son, along with many friendly faces from the Queen's College. Excellent speeches were made by our team leader April Burt, project initiator Lindsay Turnbull and the wonderful Tim Smit (Founder of the Eden Project).

THE SEYCHELLES PROJECT LAUNCH

State House



This World Environment Day the Aldabra Clean Up Project was officially launched at State House. The launch was attended by President Danny Faure who is SIF's Patron, the Vice President, the Designated Minister, the Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Secretary of States, her Excellency the British High Commissioner to Seychelles, Principal Secretaries, the board members of SIF, the IDC and the Island Conservation society, CEOs, Aldabra research station retirees, Mr Patrick Victor and of course the selected Aldabra Clean-Up Seychellois volunteers.

THE ALDABRA CLEAN UP PROJECT MADE IT TO THE G7 SUMMIT

Thanks to Seychelles President Danny Faure



The President of Seychelles, Danny Faure, shocked the leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) nations with photographs of the damage being done to the island nation's Aldabra atoll by plastic pollution. Faure told the roundtable of small islands developing states at the G7 summit in Quebec, Canada that Seychelles and other small island countries already had enough of a challenge managing their own waste, and didn't need to take on the rest of the worlds. Faure added that the islands "needed assistance with handling the vast and increasing amounts of marine litter washing up on and polluting their beaches and coasts from way beyond their shores."

*'Being at today's event at State House *and* at The Royal Society fundraising launch two weeks ago in London with High Commissioner Derick Ally, I truly felt the depth of the UK/Seychelles partnership - never stronger than on environmental protection and science.'*

BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR SEYCHELLES
CARON ROHSLER



Our team is complete...



SHEENA TALMA



ASHLEIGHNE
ANTAO



IVAN CAPRICIEUSE



CRAIG FRANCOURT



KALSEY BELLE



SAMUEL
RAMKALAWAN



CHRIS WOODHAM



GUILLAUME
MATTHEWS



HARRIET
DOWNEY



THOMAS
ZILLHARDT



BECCA
GOLDBERG



APRIL BURT

Next steps...

FUNDRAISING AWARENESS

The project requires significant funding:
The team will raise funds to finance transport to Aldabra and transfer collected plastic back to Mahé for sorting, re-use and recycling.

Reducing plastic pollution is one solution to the problem: The team will engage with and educate people on the issue of marine plastic pollution on Aldabra, in Seychelles and globally.

RESEARCH PROCESSING

What can we learn from the waste that has accumulated on Aldabra?
The team's work will improve understanding of the cause and effects of plastic pollution so we are better equipped to protect Aldabra and our oceans.

It's not enough to move the problem elsewhere! The team will engage with existing initiatives and lead new ones that will apply innovative and creative ways to recycle and repurpose the waste removed from Aldabra, preventing it ending up in landfills.



Join us!

TO REDUCE MARINE LITTER

in our oceans
in our animals
in our food



Website:

<https://queens.hubbub.net/p/AldabraProject/>

