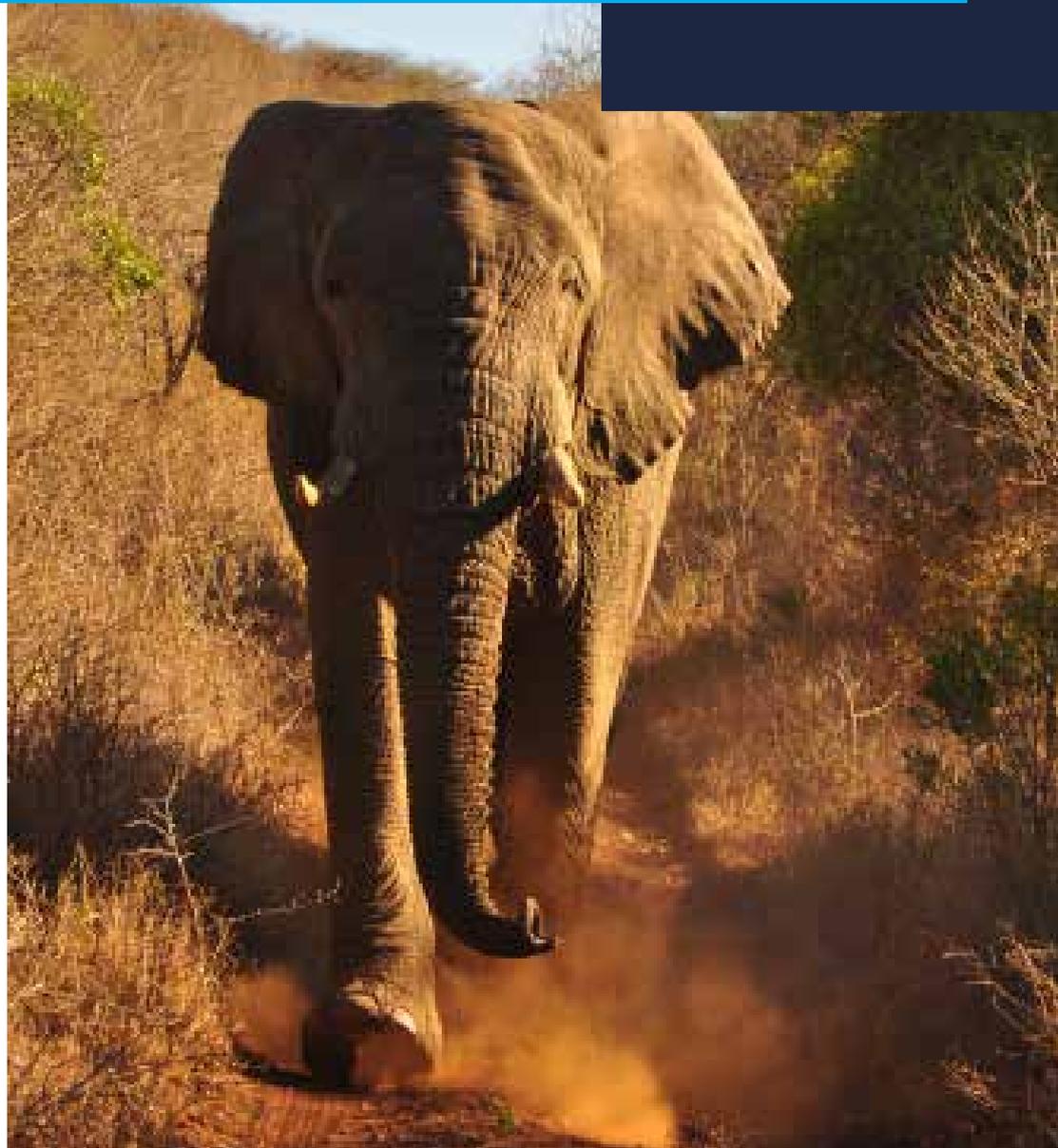


# 2018 **ANNUAL** *REPORT*



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## A Message from the Executive Director International



*In many ways, working to conserve the environment for the future of all life on this planet is an enormously challenging undertaking.*

*With so many species under pressure, the criminal trade in wildlife, environmental abuse by large industry, and enormous population pressure, it can sometimes feel like an overwhelming endeavour.*

*For this reason, it is important to take strength from the dedication of our group and growing international awareness about the environment. Now more than ever we see dedicated people and groups fighting for the health of the planet.*

*We can proudly put ourselves in that category. I must say all those who are part of our core group*

*have demonstrated unwavering passion and commitment to our cause despite adversity and, often, extreme challenges. As a group of exceptionally dedicated individuals, we carry solutions to so many, and fight for the future of generations to come.*

*One of the strengths of The Earth Organization is that we have such diversity within our team. Chapters use their strengths to impact areas in which they are passionate. In this moment, I would like to say to the Directors of our chapters, their staff and volunteers, whether you are rescuing snakes in South Africa, lions in the Ukraine, finding water where none was thought to exist, bringing solutions to regions heavily impacted by toxic spills, or writing a children's book to bring about new awareness, you are valuable.*

*And to our many members and supporters, you are a vital and sincerely appreciated part of this group. Your financial help, your guidance, your work to open doors for us to key officials and decision makers, and your reports to alert us to urgent situations, all make it possible for us to effectively obtain the results we have. Together, we are changing lives, and making true progress towards the re-creation of a healthy world for all. You are a friend.*

*I look forward to continued dedication and hard work from all our chapters, and sincerely hope that all of our supporters will look to find ways to make an even stronger commitment this year to help us achieve the implementation of even more far-reaching and impactful solutions.*

*I'm very proud to bring you our Annual report herein for 2017/2018 of the accomplishments and forward progress of our most active chapters during this period.*

## Our mission statement

The Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization is an international non-profit conservation organization that seeks to reverse the decline of the plant and animal kingdoms and our environment through education and action. We are committed to the creative and responsible rehabilitation of Planet Earth and bring new solutions to this field.

For example, we created a term for the basic principle underlying everything we do: Cooperative Ecology (CoEco). Through the application of this principle to each of the projects we take on, we are seeking to instill in people a sense and understanding that all life is interdependent, and that the decisions we all make affect the natural world, and then, in turn, circle back to affect the health and quality of life of each one of us. Basically, CoEco demonstrates that all life does best when it works together with other life towards mutual survival. When this concept is implemented, it better connects everyone to nature, and is a way of getting people to better co-operate with each other and the natural world around them.

Our purpose in working to infuse the concept of CoEco into society is to bring about a New Age of constructive decision making.



In 2018, Head Office began to categorize our work into three separate pillars:

## Environmental | Humanitarian | Conservation.

Putting the focus on these three pillars has helped us to engage in a more holistic and CoEco approach to addressing the environmental issues that we face. As always, education is the bedrock of all our activity, whether we are working to educate government officials and industry on best practices, or working with school children, or conducting job training for adults from impoverished communities.

One of the key projects that best demonstrates all three of our focus areas is the Mayibuye Game Reserve.

### MAYIBUYE COMMUNITY GAME RESERVE

This community-owned game reserve provides an opportunity to test the design and implementation of the green economy, a fairly new and emerging economic model that works to both put land into conservation and to financially sustain rural communities.

Over the last few years, The Earth Organization has worked extensively on this project; from bringing environmental education to the surrounding community, to relationship building, and more. The reserve is set to be a “Big Five” game reserve that will preserve and restore biodiversity to the area, as well as create economic stability through bringing business development, ownership and employment to the community.



Mayibuye community where honored by a visit from the Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs, Ms. Barbara Thompson, who hosted a large public event to launched the game reserve and handed over the new infrastructure to the community. left - Clive Poultney, LAEO Director, middle – Yvette Taylor LAEO Executive Director, right – Ms Barbara Thompson Deputy Minister.

In 2016 a grant application from the South African Department of Environmental Affairs was approved. The project appointed The Earth Organization as the implementing agent for the community and funded ten million rand to complete the internal infrastructure for the wildlife preserve. In 2018, we completed this project resulting in 20 kilometers of perimeter fence, 10 kilometers of double fence (next to the community), 5 kilometers of cattle fence, and the construction of a wildlife release boma (coral). In addition, 56 kilometers of internal gravel roads were fully rehabilitated from old, overgrown gravel roads, and significant sections of new road were built. Two old farm houses were renovated – the first to serve as a meeting area and offices, and the second house to serve as a training center with a lecture room, dining area, fully equipped kitchen and accommodation for lecturers. This second house will double as dormitories, at times, when we have trainees or event participants traveling to study and work with us.

Funding was also received from Trade & Investment KZN for a social Return On Investment (ROI) study, to monitor the changes that development of the area have brought to the community. This study was completed in 2018.

With the targets achieved from the above projects, two additional funding applications were approved for projects that will be starting in 2019. The first, a 3.8 million Rand grant from the National Skills Fund, will train 125 people from the area on National Resource Guardianship, how to be Nature Site Guides and Conservation General Assistants, as well as Disease Control Specialists and Household Management.

The South African government's Department of Environmental Affairs Natural Resource Management approved 8.2 million Rand to fund alien plant eradication for two and a half years as part of their environmental rehabilitation and job creation programs.

In the coming year the game numbers will be increased and elephants reintroduced into the area. It will be the first time in over 150 years that this extraordinary species will once again roam this land.

In 2019, The Earth Organization is partnering with the Tanglewood Foundation of New Zealand to bring disadvantaged learners from around the game reserve to a weekend environmental camp. This project is set to change many young lives and bring conservation to the community through the eyes of children. We expect to have an exciting report to publish about this project at the end of the coming year.

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORS**

This year we had the great privilege of being included in the prestigious Environmental Monitors Program. The initiative aims to increase conservation capacity within the South African National Parks and provincial and private nature reserves through patrols, biodiversity monitoring, environmental education and raising awareness within different communities.

In 2018, The Earth Organization took on five young and enthusiastic environmental monitors (EM's) who are now working on a number of vital tasks such as environmental monitoring, information gathering, alien plant control, and, most importantly, education and raising awareness in the local community and schools. The EM's reached many people in the community with their work:

- Handing out 1775 educational environmental booklets at 14 Schools in Kwa Ximba,
- They spoke to the visitors and staff of the Msunduzi clinic,
- Educated commuters at the Msunduzi Taxi rank,
- Educated visitors to Manzolwandle Sport Centre
- carried out a cleaning campaign with the Msunduzi Community
- Planted 24 trees in schools and community areas



## **SOUTH AFRICAN WILDLIFE COLLEGE**

The Earth Organization has had a long standing partnership with the South African Wildlife College (SAWC), the foremost training center for education in nature and wildlife conservation throughout Africa. This year, the Mayibuye Community Trust joined the SAWC Rural Initiative for the Sustainable Environment (RISE) Unit. The RISE unit works to empower communities to govern, manage and conserve their natural resources in support of their livelihoods. SAWC conducted four, three day training sessions with the Trust and members of the local community delivering training on Roles and Responsibilities, Governance and Stakeholder Engagement.

SAWC will continue these training programs in 2019, giving the Mayibuye tools to manage their land and reserve.



## ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORS

The Earth Organization partnered with South Durban Basin ABM (Area Based Management) to bring environmental education and civic awareness to the learners of Alencon Primary School in Chatsworth. The first phase of this project was an art competition for all the students. Each grade was taught about a different threatened or endangered animal, about which they then created a piece of art.



The winning learners received awards and certificates, but, more importantly, had the opportunity to participate in the beautification of Sunset Boulevard Park in a disadvantaged area. Working with well-known local graffiti artist Giffy Duminy, the benches and tables in the park were brightly decorated and the local Parks Department brought an abundance of plants and greenery to create a beautiful space.



## HAPPY EARTH FESTIVAL

The Earth Organization, once again, took place in the annual Happy Earth Festival. The focus was on improving people's environmental ethic and connecting children to nature through hands-on experiential activities that help educate learners and educators about environmental issues and ways we can address them.

The festival was very successful with over 1,500 learners from 65 schools attending. Many organizations and individuals set up experiential learning stations covering a wide range of environmental topics in a fun and interactive way.



## COECO WATER SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization's U.S headquarters (LAEO U.S.) has been intensely involved for much of 2017 and 2018 in the research, development and design of a program to implement real water solutions for the purpose of large-scale reforestation, the recreation of wildlife habitat, and to supplement water resources for regions in need. Tremendous progress was made:

- TEO U.S. executives, with a small army of passionate volunteers, completed extensive water solutions research projects that ran from 2017 through 2018, culminating in the formation of a network of groups and organizations being established to implement our environmental restoration solutions.
- During this time, we determined the statistically most reliable methods for geological analysis that can be utilized in Australia, the Middle East, and Africa to locate supplemental water sources, with the long-term purpose of implementing these techniques for reforestation, wildlife conservation and humanitarian programs. We have identified a few key areas where water scarcities are creating dangerous situations and, in early November, launched a five-year plan to utilize the technology we have acquired to help relieve these problems.
- As a result of a two-day conference we hosted in Australia to detail our five-year plan for the implementation of this program, we formed a Clean Water Solutions Consortium with working relationships between our non-profit and several for-profit entities to forward our charitable purposes in Australia, the Middle East, Africa, and the U.S.
- As a key part of the launch of this program, TEO U.S. brought on 3 carefully chosen scientists with specific qualifications, as well as administrative support staff, to become our Water Solutions Team. The team is currently in Australia for 6 months to study under and conduct R&D projects with some of the top geological analysis experts in the world.
- One of the water solution technologies we researched has been gifted to TEO U.S. and this intellectual property has now been registered in 167 countries. Our science team is currently in the process of codifying the technology and creating training manuals for it to ensure its preservation and full utilization for charitable purposes, while beginning to provide our water location analysis methods to specific field sites.



## OIL SPILL CLEAN UPS AND NON-TOXIC SOLUTIONS

The analysis paper, “A Call for a 21st-Century Solution in Oil Spill Cleanup”, researched and written by TEO U.S. execs and our Science Advisory Board in 2017 has been a key factor in opening doors to governments and other decision makers for the full implementation of enzymatic bioremediation technology for the effective cleanup of large waterways. In 2018, successful demonstrations were performed in India on the Ganges River, the Gomti River, and several other smaller rivers and lakes in India and Nepal. Formal government approval has been obtained for the use of the technology we have been advocating for to address these waterways. A large order has been received to begin the cleanup of wastewater pipes draining into the Gomti. The cleanup is scheduled to begin in early January of 2019 and will be the first of many rivers and lakes to be cleaned up by this cutting edge and thoroughly environmentally friendly technology.

Additionally, large-scale projects to clean up hundreds of miles in Iraq of soil soaked in oil and other pollutants are being negotiated to begin cleanups in 2019.

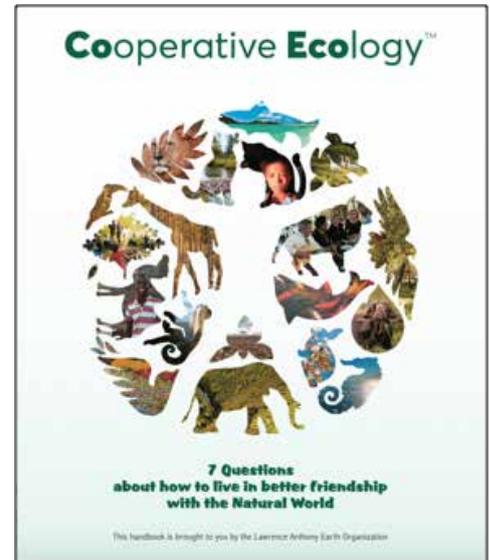


## COOPERATIVE ECOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The following are TEO U.S.’ main accomplishments for 2018 in this area:

- Our second in a series of educational manuals on the subject of Cooperative Ecology was published, this time with an additional course for teenagers. It was piloted in a large public school, Crescenta Valley High School, in La Crescenta, California and, based on that pilot, is now being fine-tuned in preparation for a larger scale roll out through public and private schools and home schools in 2019.

- Press releases, blogs and articles were used to raise awareness of the Cooperative Ecology concept utilizing our website, social media, alternative media, and other avenues.
- Our senior execs were keynote speakers at a variety of events, such as Rotary and other philanthropic club meetings and webinars, to forward the CoEco message, raising awareness of humanity's vital partnership for survival with the natural world.



### COECO EDUCATIONAL SAILING ADVENTURE FOR TEENS:

In partnership with the Ultimate Adventure Academy, we conducted a 2-week CoEco sailing ship adventure for teens on the Caribbean island of San Andreas to develop their understanding of the interdependence of all life forms and the importance of their daily choices in protecting the world around them. A similar CoEco program is being offered to teens who wish to avail themselves of this amazing adventure for anywhere from 2 weeks to a full study year.



### COOPERATIVE ECOLOGY SAFARI:

We conducted an educational Eco Safari to South Africa to raise awareness of the CoEco concept and to support the conservation efforts of Mayibuye (SEE PAGE 2) and Thula Thula (both wildlife preserves created by our Founder), and several other wildlife preserves in southern Africa.



The Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization France (LAEO France) has had a wide sphere of influence this year. They found a new publisher for *The Elephant Whisperer* by our founder, Lawrence Anthony. The new publisher will publish the book in French in 2019 with 2 additional chapters.

LAEO France volunteers mobilized to raise citizen awareness of the decreasing numbers of wildlife in many areas of the world. According to the latest report from WWF's Living Planet, published on October 30th, population counts between 1970 and 2018 have dropped by 60%. The planet can no longer afford to lose species at this rate. In order to educate people and inspire action related to this issue, booths and exhibits were setup in a number of cultural festivals, book fairs and photo exhibitions. As a part of this campaign, the team also took part in CAP Wolf's protests for the protection of wolves in France and led an awareness workshop for children at the International Animal and Nature Photo Festival in Montier-en-Der.

LAEO France also gave support to other like-minded organizations that work to protect elephants, seals and many other animals. In addition, we fundraised to support LAEO Ukraine's project to rescue and relocate 4 circus lions from squalid conditions in cages in Ukraine to their natural habitat in a wildlife preserve in South Africa.

Since the objective of LAEO Europe is mainly the protection of biodiversity and the welfare of animals, the association could not remain insensitive to their distress, be it elephants (with Elephant Haven), rhinos in South Africa, cats, dogs, birds, wolves, seals (with the Wildlife Care Center), laying hens or marine fauna, as well as advocating for alternative methods to animal testing through Antidote-Europe.

It is therefore natural that we wanted to support the Open Letter to the President of France on the initiative by the Citizen Party for Animals, as well as the Manifesto Against Hunting published by the Brigitte Bardot Foundation. We joined these groups to contribute our voices, forward the message, and promote the signing of their petitions that laws be put in place to protect animals against abuse.

The Elephant and Rhinoceros March was postponed until next spring to coincide with CITES COP18. Many supporters are expected to, once again, stand together on this topic. We are making every effort to forward Lawrence Anthony's Cooperative Ecology message that "None Survive Alone".



In 2018, LAEO Ghana chalked some remarkable successes in all its educational program areas. Our programs specifically address creating environmental awareness through education in schools and communities of Ghana.

Taking a holistic approach, LAEO Ghana worked to change the lives of children on many levels. We educated students in 32 schools, reaching a total number of 4,603 learners in total. Schools were encouraged to separate their refuse into paper waste and plastic waste. Several litter bins were distributed with the help of Zoomlion, Ltd., a waste management company in Ghana.

To broaden students' growth, a program called 'Justice for Children' was started by LAEO Ghana in 2017 and continued in 2018. We distributed 1,005 booklets educating children on the need to protect their environment, stay away from illegal drugs, and work cooperatively with their siblings, parents, family, friends, schools and teachers to help make the world a safer, cleaner place.

This led to a collaboration with an organization called Youth for Human Rights International in which LAEO Ghana raised funds to purchase and distribute educational materials on the subject of the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights to 5 schools.

Through our campaigns we seek to mobilize and harness voices across all ten regions of Ghana to call for what is right, what is fair and what is just. LAEO Ghana was able to procure a long-planned-for projector and, using this visual tool, we visited several communities, reviewing educational material published by LAEO International on the effect our actions have on the environment. Many teachers and members of the communities took part.

Selected school children were taken on excursions to various natural areas to raise their environmental awareness; places that were visited included the Akosombo Dam site and The Bole National Park.

Even with limited resources, we are happy with the progress we made in 2018. LAEO Ghana knows there is so much to be done to accomplish our Founder's aims and objectives in making this planet a safe, habitable place for all and we are working to accomplish those goals in our own region.



LAEO Johannesburg initiated a program entitled “Earth - the Water Planet” in 2014 and has been successfully moving this program forward since then. The project uses cutting edge multi-media technology to teach underprivileged children about the wonders of our planet. The Project’s program is designed around the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) and students are taught in relation to their appropriate age groups, taking into consideration the level of perception of each student’s group. Each topic discussed is covered by relevant videos presented on a plasma TV screen which makes it possible for students to learn the natural science material through motion imaging in vivid colors (high definition display). We are committed to innovative teaching by utilizing different resources such as documentaries that have been tailored to learners of different levels.

This project is free of gender, race, political or religious bias. Its core principle is to help the planet by creating a greater depth of environmental awareness whilst encouraging students to obtain a closer understanding of Earth’s phenomena and its history and matters regarding the flora and fauna within the diversity of ecosystems. During the course of the project, environmental impacts caused by social conflicts are explained to students. From wars to accidental disasters such as marine oil spills, we show students how these cause a sharp decline in the natural resilience of ecosystems and work to get their commitment to help prevent these in the future.

In 2017, our “Earth, the Water Planet” Project was endorsed by the Department of War Studies, in King’s College at the London University, UK, helping to bring international recognition to our work.

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## “EARTH, THE WATER PLANET” PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This project aims to improve the behavior of younger generations by teaching respect for life. Simultaneously, the Project encompasses a holistic approach using playful tools, such as games and outdoors activities.

The program’s implementation has 3 distinctive phases and these were run in different institutions. Engagement with the learners took place three times a month, in addition to field trips:

- 1) In the first basic-theoretical phase, we worked with 33 students from 4 to 17 years old, irrespective of the student ratio for learning capacity;
- 2) The second phase entailed working with 58 students between 11 – 17 years old with advanced science.
- 3) The third phase tutors novice-trainee students on an individual basis from the age of 18 years or older, incorporating life skills and sociology.

**THE THEORETICAL SECTION** was achieved using multimedia using a 48” HDD TV and a 360° surround sound stereo. Visual material is selected according to the subject under discussion and at the correct gradient for students. Additionally there are theoretical classes which are integrated with the practical classes for the advanced older students.



### THE PRACTICAL SECTION

– this was divided into two parts:

#### Practical A:

Field work was introduced to a group of eight pre-selected students in 2017. This enabled the teaching of basic techniques for an eco-biological assessment using a wetland as the Ecosystem model (situated in Benoni).



#### Practical B:

Advanced students were given practical experience by attending science excursions. In 2017 an advance science group of students was taken to the Wetlands in Benoni to learn principals of Freshwater Ecology. Then traveling to the bush at Tsakane Safari, which is situated at the Balule Nature Reserve, these excursions were used as a base for further conservation and environmental coursework in 2018. A novice student-trainee was taken on nature conservation training to the Centre for Animal Rehabilitation and Education (CARE) at Phalaborwa which is part of the greater Kruger National Park region. Students are taught about basic aspects of Ecology, Conservation and the Environment.



### Why a Natural Sciences project?

Poverty and criminality run parallel. Countries where the chances for juvenile education are slim are prone to higher criminal indexes, adding to the disregard of human responsibility towards the environment, as part of the educational viewpoint on how humanity impacts on Earth. We believe that a holistic approach, which includes a natural science project, will enhance South Africa's socio-political planning.

## NON-PROFIT PROJECT APPLICATION

Our non-profit project applies the curriculum content by using documentaries from sources such as the Discovery Channel, National Geographic, Cosmos, Mocomi Kids, Make-Me Genius, and others. As the visual impact is very engaging, learners are more focused, with improved learning. Using audio-visual methods has been seen to benefit students with learning difficulties. The pilot program is currently running and has been described as having a beneficial effect on students by the administration at Kids Haven, a large orphanage hosting more than 300 children (<http://www.kidshaven.org.za>).

### The Volunteers Help and Sponsorship

The donations made by sponsors to the project (which is currently focused in Gauteng), will enable the organization to raise the quality and number of classes offered, increasing the number of students who have access to Natural Sciences knowledge, allowing more information to be passed on. Assistance and cooperation of volunteers who have been participating in the program is helping to promote the project, as a number of volunteers hold significant professional skills and hobbies that have made it possible to expose students to different facets of learning. This has engendered greater engagement and improved ability to think and prosper.



In 2018, LAEO NJ amplified their mission of introducing children to animal literacy, biodiversity and wildlife conservation through the visual arts with the completion of the coloring book “Andrea Goes to Art School”. The book, which has as its main focus coral reefs and its many life forms, will be available on Amazon in 2019.

Using art to awaken young minds to conservation, the New Jersey chapter held an arts and conservation workshop based on the 2018 theme for World Wildlife Day: “Big Cats: Predators under Threat”, and held it on International Tiger Day. The Siberian Tiger, one of the most beautiful of tiger species and also one of the most endangered, was the subject of the workshop.

Additionally, an annual painting competition called “Beautiful Animals” was initiated. The 2018 winner was 5-year-old Elizaveta “Liza” Jeren with her entry “Pink Giraffe”.



Lisa 5yr



## AMPHIBIAN & REPTILE CONSERVATION

### REPTILE RESCUES:

2018 was a fantastic year for our chapter's director, Nick Evans, in terms of rescue work! Usually, he is only called out to rescue snakes and occasionally Monitor Lizards. But in 2018, a dream came true for him when he was called out for 2 crocodile rescues in one week! The first specimen was over 2.5 meters long (about 7 ½ feet) and had entered a water treatment plant. The second was in a river in the same area as the first. The second was a bit smaller, less than 2 meters -- which is not large for a crocodile -- but both were a handful to rescue.

He caught and released a large number of Black Mambas in 2018, and on two occasions, two were caught together! On the first occasion, Nick captured a pair in a roof that had come together to mate. They were actually hiding out in the ceiling with a young Monitor Lizard, which, per Nick, made the rescue even more interesting. On the second occasion, near the end of the year, Nick captured two gravid/pregnant female black mambas in a garden. Both were going to lay their eggs in an old septic tank, which had been mostly filled up with rocks and sand. Per Nick, these were particularly "stand out" rescues for him.

2018 also saw his rescue of 6 Southern African Pythons, a protected species listed as Vulnerable. His rescue stats exceeded any other year to date, with most of these rescues happening in very rural areas, which is unusual as, historically, in rural regions these species are often killed by locals and used in traditional medicine rather than rescued for re-release further away from human habitat. This improvement in the protection of these species in these areas is a direct result of the extensive educational and awareness work that Nick has been doing in rural areas, resulting in local people learning that they can call for help rather than kill the snake, and that protecting the species is vitally important to their overall eco system.



## EDUCATION:

In 2018, Nick conducted seminars and workshops to close to 5,600 people about reptiles and amphibians and the importance of their preservation. He presented talks for government officials, as well as schools, companies, charities and other events, passionately working to bring about a greater understanding of the critical value of these creatures to the world's eco systems.



## RESEARCH:

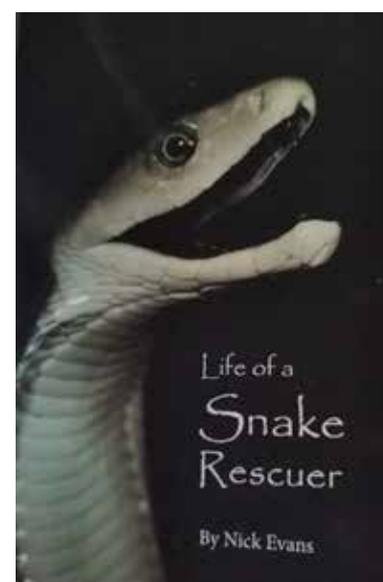
Nick currently has several research projects running, including:

- Obtaining almost 100 DNA samples from Black Mambas in the Durban area, and, together with the University of KZN, the analysis of these samples will start in 2019. The study will focus on the gene pool of Black Mambas in Durban. The Black Mambas that were released in two specific valleys have also been microchipped. The only mambas that are released there are ones caught on the border of these valleys. Nick has had significant support from the manufacturers of this product (Microchip), and they have recently donated more chips to this cause.

Conflict between snakes and humans, as well as pets, is something of interest to Nick and he recorded 53 incidents between dogs and venomous snakes in Durban. Continuing his research, he started working with medical professionals to build up a database of how many snakebites occur each year within the province of KZN. This is a new study which will bring insight in the coming years.

## A NEW COOPERATIVE ECOLOGY BOOK PUBLISHED:

Just before the year ended, Nick launched the publication of his new book detailing his most exciting, hilarious and dangerous rescue calls. The book makes for a thrilling read, while, at the same time, educating the reader on the value and importance of these species and the roles they play in cooperatively supporting the long-term survival of the interdependent life forms around them. Taking him three years to write, design and self-publish, he is understandably proud to have finished it and all of our chapters are looking forward to using it as part of their Cooperative Ecology curriculum.



As poverty is one of the driving forces in the devastation of both wildlife and healthy habitat, LAEO Uganda has continued our project to bring significant income to our local community through the planting of coffee, whilst providing buffers to forest areas. Additionally, we are working with the community to help grow much-needed food.

LAEO Uganda planted coffee to assist conservation efforts in schools. This was done in 4 secondary schools: Kanyinya Hillside High school, Butunduzi Secondary school, Emaus High School and Rugorra Secondary School. We also visited ten primary schools and, in total, distributed over 3000 coffee plant seedlings.

In the local nutrition gardens, we planted a variety of vegetables such as tomatoes, egg plants (aubergine), and carrots, with the aim of promoting good health for the community. As well as generating income to help the youth and the community, the gardens also lessen the need for environmentally harmful activities like chopping down trees to manufacture charcoal which is sold to generate income, and swamp destruction for farming.

As the area is drought prone, making agricultural projects challenging, LAEO Head Office stepped in to assist us with the purchase of a much-needed solar irrigation system. These solar panels power the pump that runs the sprinkler system. As the system is solar powered, there is no need for other types of pollutant-generating fuels. The system is working very well, and our crops have been very successful, setting a good example for other farmers in the region.



Lionel De Lange, Director of LAEO Ukraine, has had a busy year with multiple, highly successful rescues of wildlife from substandard conditions. Although Lionel's focus has generally been on bear rescues, this year he came across 4 lions that were in shocking, caged conditions, and effectively managed to move them through the complex process of relocating them to their natural habitat in Africa.

LAEO Ukraine also partnered and assisted other facilities working on animal rescue, including assisting Synevir Bear Rehab Centre in the mountains of Ukraine with fencing to make it possible for them to accept into their sanctuary additional bears that LAEO Ukraine rescued and enhancing their property to improve conditions for all their bears. In addition LAEO Ukraine provided medication and dental supplies to do bear dentistry and sterilize rescued bears. In 2017, three bears, Boris, Buri and Jennifer, were rescued by LAEO Ukraine and sent to the facility.

LAEO Ukraine was able to secure land to be used as a place of safety/haven for abused wildlife in Sambir, West Ukraine. In August working with SOS Zoo and Bear Rescue, they rehomed their first rescued bear to the new facility at Sambir. Marsha was rescued from a life of animal slavery after 19 years as a performing circus bear, having been taken away from her mother at just 2 months old. When Marsha was not performing she lived in a cage in the back of a small enclosed truck in squalor and filth with barely enough space to turn around. Her diet was shocking and she was fed sugary soft drinks and junk food. She now has a 357 square meters enclosure and although it took some days to get her to come out into her new paradise, her new home has grass and a pool, a few fruit trees, and a swing. She gets loads of delicious, healthy food and never has to perform again.



Whilst rescuing bears, Lionel discovered three lions in shocking condition in a concrete cage of 35 square meters with no direct sunshine and no decent ventilation. Except for the front, the entire cage was closed. The lions had been in a circus until they were left behind in the dilapidated cage, living in their own filth as there was no way of cleaning their enclosure.

A temporary enclosure was built while the lengthy, formal CITES applications were made to move them to a facility in South Africa. While the preparations were made to move the three females, Charlie, Kai and Luca, Lionel heard about an animal trader that had two lion cubs. By the time the trader was approached the female cub had already disappeared and only the little male, Nathan, was left. Nathan was destined for a life in the circus so it was a satisfying and worthwhile endeavor to save him from this life. Once the trader relinquished Nathan to Lionel, he was included in the group destined for South Africa.

In November 2018, the four lions finally started their 76-hour trip to South Africa. The trip was daunting: 13 hours by road from Sambir to Kiev Borispol Airport; and 3 flights to get them to their destination from Kiev to Johannesburg International Airport, and then in a small, private aircraft from Rand Airport in Johannesburg to a private grass airstrip in Seaview, Port Elizabeth. They left Ukraine in freezing temperatures of -7C but finally woke up in their night shelters at Kragga Kamma Game Park in South Africa. The journey was not without hiccups with the truck breaking down on the 13 hour journey through snow in Ukraine to Kiev, and then Charlie needing a bit of roadside surgery and care; but they passed vet health inspection and customs in Kiev.

The lions are doing very well, healing up nicely and enjoying their new forever home in a large natural environment with the open space, grass, trees, sun and even the inquisitive giraffe and zebra who paid them a visit in the morning.

The rescue of the next batch of bears and lions is already underway. Lionel is in intensive negotiations to rescue animals from the horrors of Pokrovsk Zoo and the rescue of two more bears called Alisa and Timka from the city zoo where they have been living in a small steel and concrete cage, is well underway. Alisa is blind and special care has to be taken in building her new enclosure. The two bears will be housed together in a purpose-built enclosure using electric fencing – not steel bars and concrete. And they will have plenty of enrichment and natural earth and trees – a far cry from the inhuman conditions they are now enduring.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

2018 was an incredible year with some impressive wins across the board, 2019 is going to be even bigger. As the Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization grows year on year we get closer and closer to meeting that vision that started with the late Dr Lawrence Anthony.

I can say with great certainty the Dr Anthony would have been incredibly proud of each and every chapter and the incredible work that they have done and continue to do.

*“Life survives through biodiversity, and biodiversity is achieved only as a shared initiative with and through all life forms on Planet Earth . And to do so Homo sapiens must live in close collaborations with the plant and animal kingdoms in a healthy, life-sustaining environment. There is no other way. We are all in this game of life together. “*

Lawrence Anthony, Babylon’s Ark

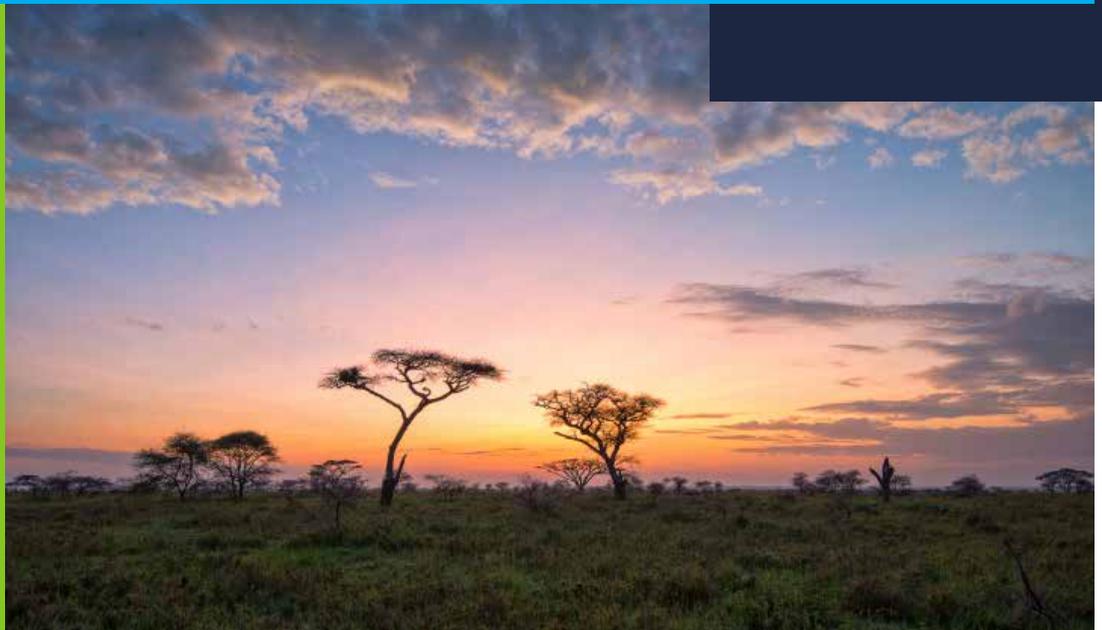
I would like to thank each and every Chapter the world over as we strive forward and take on new challenges.



## CONTACT

✉ [info@earthorganization.org](mailto:info@earthorganization.org)

🌐 <https://www.earthorganization.org>



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