



JAHRESBERICHT
ANNUAL REPORT

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Helping people to help themselves

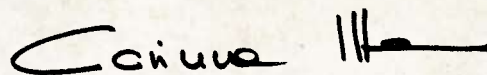
"In the beginning was fire. The campfire. In the year 2000, right in the middle of the northern part of the Kalahari Gemsbok Park. The birth of Comanis. The basis for the foundation was laid down in discussions of the kind that are only possible between friends under the vast, starry African skies. Collaboration and togetherness amongst some wonderful people brought exceptional projects into being. My own involvement has brought me so many fantastic experiences that I often feel as though it is me who has received all the gifts.

Those who commit themselves to Comanis do so out of personal conviction. The idea of initiating a project that other people carry further is very attractive. But those who support Comanis not only get things moving, they can also see for themselves – mostly on the spot – just how the project is thriving. And it is precisely here where the essence of the concept lies. Comanis is also the coming together of

people with one and the same way of thinking. People who, with their knowledge and commitment, personally put everything into helping people to help themselves.

As a look back at the past year, in the enclosed annual report (in the form of postcards) we present people who are connected in some way with Comanis projects. It is their commitment that has made it at all possible for us to continue to realise our plans, ideas and visions."

Corinne Itten, President of the Comanis Foundation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corinne Itten', followed by a stylized flourish.



Relocating endangered species into Hlilwane North

"Hlilwane North is an important extension of the Hlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary. The montane grasslands and boulder communities of vegetation are integral to this protected habitat - a part of an ecotype which has rapidly been invaded and destroyed by alien commercial forests and unplanned human expansion, displacing native wildlife almost everywhere in western Swaziland. Hlilwane North is an important catchment area, contributing greatly to stream and river flow needed by communities downstream, as well as an essential extension of Hlilwane on which to establish roan antelope, oxibi, vaal, rhebuck and many other rare, threatened and locally endangered species. All capital aspects of development will need help with funding while recurrent costs will be met from revenues. We are grateful to Corinne Itten of Comanis Foundation, Hamish Currie of Back to Africa and Dr John Knowles for their substantial support of this project which not only relocates roan antelope from overseas, but also seeks to habituate them to the wild as a fully viable population."

Ted Reilly, CEO Big Game Parks, Swaziland





Comanis Footprint



Emathagayezi in wild herds

"I am 58 years old, and at the time I was born these animals had already disappeared from Swaziland. I saw many animals for the **first** time in my life when I came to work for Big Game Parks. I love it here. I know all the roan by name and I know from which mother and father each calf comes - for instance Corinne is the daughter of Phesheya and Ngwedle, and Hamish is the son of Phesheya and Langhapi. It will be a day to remember when it can be said that emathagayezi (roan antelope) are again part of Swaziland's wild herds. I love this work because it keeps my heritage alive for our children and their children to see. They are like my cattle - they know me too."

Sam Dlamini,
Ranger at Mlilwane Game Sanctuary, Swaziland





Made from a good idea

"It began as a joke, when my mother came with the news that she met someone who told her about making paper beads. We just wanted to try and see how one could benefit from making beads. Our Coordinator Wilga du Plessis helped us to organise a group of members (and brought even more of her friends) including my family and other people from our community. At the beginning it wasn't easy, but being patient showed how rewarding it was. We enjoyed it the time they introduced the making of necklaces. Right now we are a team of nine, covering six families. When the project began, our living standard was extremely low. Only my father had a job but he wasn't able to provide the basics. The little money we made went towards buying food for the family. In mid-2008 we had a little to spare and my father also started saving a bit of money so he managed to put a deposit on a house. When I look back from where we started I see quite a bit of achievement. Since we had just entered South Africa from Zimbabwe it was hard to make ends meet. Repaper gave us the opportunity to do better over long period of time."

Norma Nldowo, Worker for Repaper, South Africa





Comanis Footprint



NO. 4

A new Noah's Ark

What is actually so special about Comanis? It is the dedication of highly motivated, unselfish and experienced people. It is also the excellent, professional network. And it is certainly the case that at Comanis there are not just projects - there are concrete realisations. Of course, Comanis also offers the possibility of seeing results on the spot, of bringing one's own ideas and playing one's part by actively helping. The realistic, practical concept and the manageable projects for the support and preservation of endangered biotopes in the southern regions of Africa convinced me: we are trying, little by little, to construct a new Noah's Ark. During my personal trip I participated in the effectuation of the ongoing resettlement of roan antelopes in new conservation areas. The population of these antelopes in southern African regions is endangered.

I have seen that Comanis genuinely enriches my life and I look forward to dedicating my new free time to the foundation.

Jean-Pierre Jacot, Sponsor





Join the foundation

"In order for the Comanis Foundation to most effectively fulfil its objectives of assisting with wildlife conservation and community upliftment projects in southern Africa, the Directors of the Foundation have decided to create a base in Windhoek, Namibia.

I am Anton van Schalkwyk, a conservationist and businessman. I have been approached to head this project in Namibia. My primary objectives will be to manage current projects, for example the Nossob River project, and also to advise Comanis Switzerland about potential future projects. I will invite influential local conservationists and community role-players to join the existing Foundation (Switzerland) members as directors of the Comanis Namibia board."

Anton van Schalkwyk, Gariep River Adventures,
Director Comanis Namibia





SHOOT FOR WATER

"I am a photographer.
If I can, I want to make a difference.

The San people are arguably the original inhabitants of southern Africa. The San people of South Africa are called Khomani. They currently live south of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park between Nama and coloured communities at the settlements called Witdraai, Andriesvale and Welkom.

During my studies I discovered that the San are probably the most photographed and researched group in the world, but all the photographs were taken by outsiders and not by the people of the Kalahari. I decided to arrange a photographic workshop for the grade-seven kids of Welkom so that they can have the opportunity to show us how they see themselves and the Kalahari.

Throughout my visits to the Kalahari I saw and heard that their biggest health hazard is the quality of the drinking water. So this project is to raise money for a water purifying system to be put up in Welkom settlement to better the living conditions of the people."

Cara Bakkes, photographer, South Africa