



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Building lasting conservation

Photo credit : Velo Anselme



**FANAMBY**  
DEFIS - CHALLENGES



Photo credit : Fanamby | Sandy Ravaloniaina



# EDITORIAL

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The year 2025 offered little breathing room for Madagascar’s conservation community.

With USAID pulling out, international funding becoming unreliable, and a national political crisis unfolding during fire season, we have had to work within tighter constraints. Protected areas have been under real pressure.

Yet despite this uncertainty, Fanamby has managed to hold its ground. Rather than a year of setbacks, 2025 became a test, a moment of truth for the conservation model we have spent five years carefully building and refining in the field.

Our approach rests on three pillars: shared governance, local economic development, and strong community engagement. And this year, that model was put to the test:

Thanks to our patrol teams and alert communities, deforestation alerts at Anjozorobe dropped by 61 percent between 2023 and 2025.

In the Menabe region, local authorities managed to contain fires despite

extremely challenging conditions. Remarkably, 40 percent of their fire-fighting efforts this year were actually initiated by local communities themselves.

And across all our sites, sustainable economic activities are starting to take shape, giving communities real alternatives to the pressures they face.

That said, we cannot overlook the challenges. Fires threatened the Avenue of the Baobabs, and we hit scaling obstacles with our honey sector initiative in Andrafiarana. These reminders tell us our model still has room to improve.

This work takes time, flexibility, and ongoing commitment from both government and communities alike.

This report, “**Building Lasting Conservation,**” reflects on 2025 and where we have come. It shows how, even amid multiple crises, shared governance, local economic opportunity, and real community involvement can help us weather the storms ahead and move forward.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>COS</b>	Steering and Monitoring Committee
<b>KMD</b>	Dina Enforcement Committee
<b>KMMFA</b>	Protected Area Management and Protection Committee
<b>KMT</b>	Environmental Protection Committee
<b>MBG</b>	Missouri Botanical Garden
<b>OMC</b>	Joint Monitoring Body
<b>SMART</b>	Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool
<b>TGRN</b>	Natural Resource Management Transfer
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VOI</b>	Community-level Village Authority
<b>VSLA</b>	Village Savings and Loan Association



Photo credit : Fanamby | Sandy Ravaloniaina

# FANAMBY AT A GLANCE

Since 1997, Fanamby has taken on the challenge of conservation: protecting biodiversity by working alongside local communities to strengthen their resilience.

Why? Because biodiversity is not a luxury. It is water. It is food. It is protection against storms and droughts. It is the very foundation of our survival.

Across 590,000 hectares of protected areas, Fanamby works alongside the communities who live there. Because conservation is not decided for them; it is built with them. Since 2019, it has expanded its approach to Fénérive Est in partnership with Missouri Botanical Garden, in order to combine social entrepreneurship and conservation.

Today, Fanamby is refining its strategy and relying on three pillars to meet this challenge: co-management of protected areas, conservation led with communities, and the development of sustainable value chains.

Ultimately, we would like the conservation of their own forests to return to local communities.



## Fanamby by the Numbers



**11**

Flagship Species



**05**

Protected Areas



**590 000**

hectares of Category V Protected Area



**169 000**

people reached by development activities



**740**

community patrol officers



**84**

staff across Madagascar

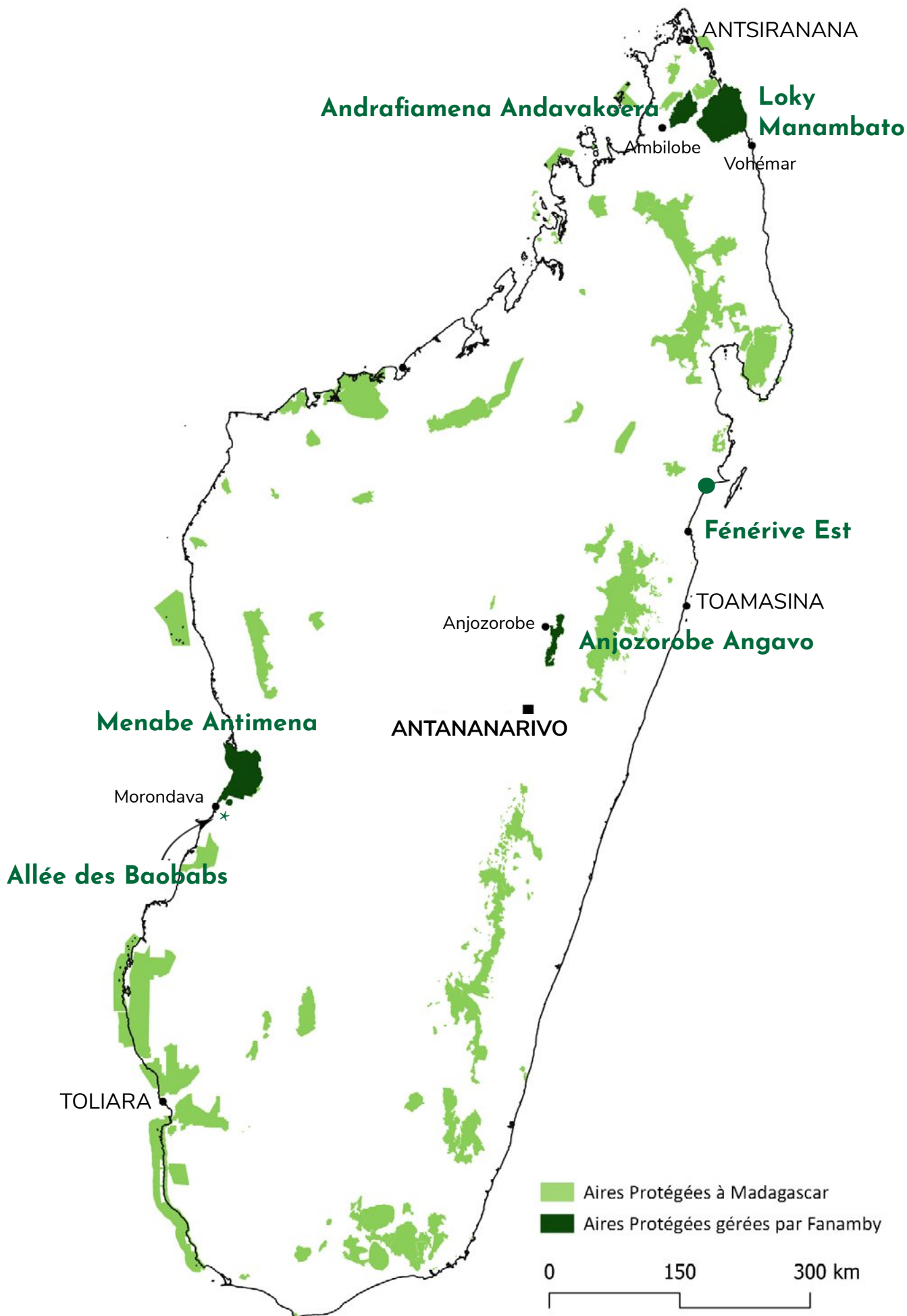




Photo credit: Vêlo Anselme

# COMMUNITIES on the front lines of conservation

## A COLLECTIVE MATURITY

*In Menabe Antimena and Anjozorobe Angavo, communities are holding the frontline. Two of the country's most fragile protected areas, exposed to political instability, land pressures, and migration flows. Everything seemed poised to accelerate forest loss. And yet...*

Menabe Antimena is a vast dry forest in the west, long written off as lost. Just seven years ago, nearly 2,000 hectares were disappearing each year to illegal maize and peanut cultivation.

In 2025, despite a fragile political climate, the forest loss recorded was among the lowest seen over the past five years. Community patrols intensified. Firebreaks were maintained. Vigilance was sustained daily.

The same momentum is playing out at Anjozorobe Angavo, home to the last humid forest massifs of the

Central Highlands. Demand for timber and charcoal from the capital remains strong.

Persistent poverty and population growth mean pressures continue. Yet this year, deforestation alerts dropped 61 percent compared to 2023.

A significant decline. Fewer alerts, but more importantly, greater local commitment. On the ground, communities are stepping up, rules are being respected better. A collective maturity that is taking shape, one step at a time.

# HOW COMMUNITIES PROTECT THE FORESTS

The forests have held because of communities first and foremost. They are no longer on the sidelines. They patrol, they alert, they engage in discussion. Sometimes they push back. Being on the front line is their daily reality.

SMART patrols strengthen this field presence. Every patrol is recorded and mapped. This data serves both to document infractions and to track forest change. It allows us to monitor forest conditions: how certain areas are densifying, natural regeneration patterns, species observations.

Nothing is left to guesswork. Data comes in, is verified, then discussed with teams. It shapes priorities, identifies zones needing closer watch, and supports dialogue with authorities.

This year, responsibility expanded to include ecological monitoring. Communities now also collect observations on wildlife and habitat conditions.

They are no longer just passing through the forest. They are taking stewardship of it, with evidence to back it up.



Photo credit : Fanamby / Alain Tony Mario



Photo credit : YMA 500 / Vahatritra - ARIJAOA

## COMMUNITY PATROLS

KMT, KMMFA, fire agents. Acronyms you hear every day at Fanamby. Behind them are women and men committed to protecting the forest. But what real difference do they make on the ground? One of our patrollers answers.

**FILANTSOA MANANTENA,**  
KMMFA, Menabe Antimena

Not patrolling the forest is like leaving your house open and unattended. At first, nothing happens. Then, gradually, people start thinking it belongs to no one anymore.

They move in, occupy it, transform it. The forest follows the same logic. If there is no visible presence, if no one is moving through it, some start clearing land without warning. And over time, the clearings spread. The forest shrinks before your eyes.

For us, patrolling means taking responsibility for protecting and managing our forest. It means showing that it has value to us. That someone is watching over it.

And when risks go beyond what we can manage alone, law enforcement needs to be there supporting us as well.



Photo credit : YMA 500 / Vahatritra - ARIJAOA



## FROM ALLÉE DES BAOBABS TO ABU DHABI

Beige vests, attentive eyes, stationed beneath Menabe's giants, they are neither credentialed experts nor scientists from elsewhere.

They are women and men from the village. They are there to preserve this heritage that belongs to them too. It is thanks to their daily presence that we can still admire these baobabs today.

In 2025, their commitment crossed borders, recognized by the IUCN International Rangers Awards in Abu Dhabi.

Recognition worthy of their work. In September, fires driven by hot, violent winds reached the Avenue.

Quickly, they mobilized the surrounding community to contain the flames. Within hours, they had extinguished the fires and spared the main area.



**Soary RAZAFINDRAZAKA**

Regional Director  
Fanamby Menabe

«It was a great honor to represent them at the Rangers Awards, because this prize belongs to them first and foremost. Because protecting the forest means listening to them, correcting course together, moving forward side by side. Without their daily presence and their courage, no conservation could endure.»



Photo credit : Fanamby | Sandy Ravaloniaina

# SHARED GOVERNANCE

## LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AT THE HEART OF GOVERNANCE

Strong co-management institutions make it possible to decide together. And deciding together also means taking responsibility together. This conviction is what led us to make shared governance a cornerstone of our approach.

A protected area is first and foremost an inhabited territory. It was created in consultation with local communities and elected authorities, to offer forests a clearer legal framework. The forest is not protected against communities, but with them and for them.

Co-management then becomes a space where decisions are made alongside management and authorities, where development needs can also be voiced.

And this changes things. Where communities once avoided authorities, it is now they who alert them to infractions. In 2025, 40 percent of OMC interventions were triggered by them. When the forest is protected with them, it holds.

## THE COS

The Steering and Monitoring Committee (or Comité d’Orientation et de Suivi in French) is where the governance of a protected area takes concrete shape.

Each year, priorities are debated and set together. Local and regional authorities, community representatives, law enforcement, partners, managers. All present. Each with their own realities, constraints, and expectations.

Conservation is discussed, of course, but also local development, land conflicts, and challenges encountered in the field. Tensions are not avoided. They are put on the table.

It is in this space that decisions are



Photo credit : Fanamby | Sandy Raveloinaina



Photo credit : Madagascar Film and Photography | Michel Strogoff

built collectively. And responsibility becomes shared.

The COS is therefore not simply an annual meeting. It is a space for dialogue and coordination that allows the management of the protected area to be grounded in local realities.

A place where decisions are not simply made for the territory, but with those who live there and depend on it.

# A LOCAL MANAGEMENT THAT RESTORES RESOURCES

In Loky Manambato, the tahirin-daoko are community fishing reserves. They illustrate co-management founded on the direct involvement of communities.

With Fanamby's support, fishers themselves identified the essential breeding zones and decided to close them voluntarily to allow marine resources to regenerate.

Nine reserves were established this way, each managed by a local association according to rules defined collectively. The system relies on active community institutions.

Fishing associations ensure surveillance of the zones, while the Komity Manantanteraka ny Dina

oversee rule enforcement and manage infractions.

Women also play a central role in mangrove management, through patrols, reforestation, and awareness activities.

Over 1,000 hectares are now under their responsibility.

The effects are visible: fish stocks are regenerating, catches are increasing, and mangroves are reclaiming their role as natural nurseries. The tahirin-daoko demonstrate that shared governance makes it possible to reconcile conservation, food security, and the resilience of coastal communities.



Mention : <https://tinyurl.com/3x8zkarx>



**MACK BRICE**  
Marine Conservation  
Officer  
Loky Manambato

“The tahirin-daoko shows that when communities define and enforce rules themselves, conservation becomes concrete and lasting. Fishers protect breeding zones and directly observe the effects of their decisions on resources.”

This initiative was highlighted in the Local Biodiversity Outlook, an international report documenting conservation initiatives led by local communities and indigenous peoples. It demonstrates that local rules can reconcile biodiversity with community livelihoods.”

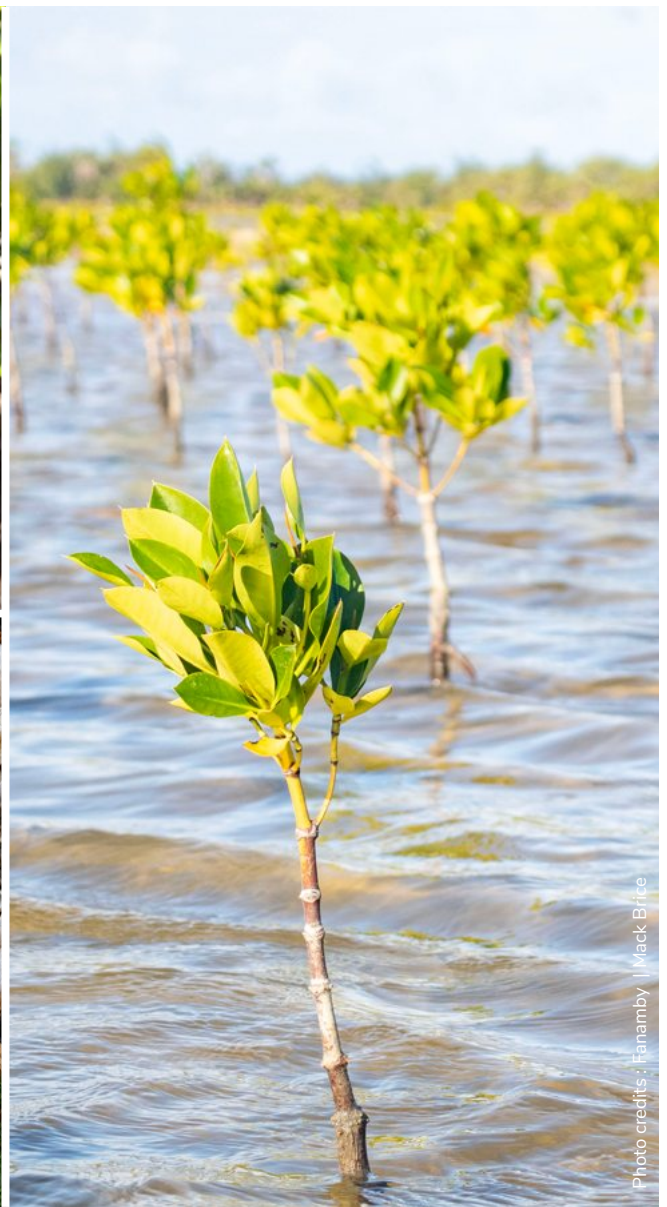


Photo credits : Fanamby | Mack Brice



Photo credit : Fanamby | Sandy Ravaloniana

# STRUCTURING for resilience

For Fanamby, local structures are the key to driving sustainable local development. As the Malagasy proverb says, “Izay mitambatra vato”, strength lies in unity.

On the ground, this vision comes to life through local structures built around protected areas. For Fanamby, “structuring” means bringing people together, providing training, formalizing groups, and, above all, empowering communities.

Today, over 5,183 producers receive support, with 60% organized into 73 associations across seven different sectors. This collective approach strengthens the community’s ability to weather challenges and build a more stable economic foundation.

In Fénérive Est, this momentum has boosted women’s inclusion through economic alternatives like market gardening. Within this sector, 227

women are now organized into cooperatives. This structure helps improve food security for their households while generating much-needed extra income for their families.

Beyond farming, these initiatives foster collective learning and give residents a seat at the table in local decision-making.

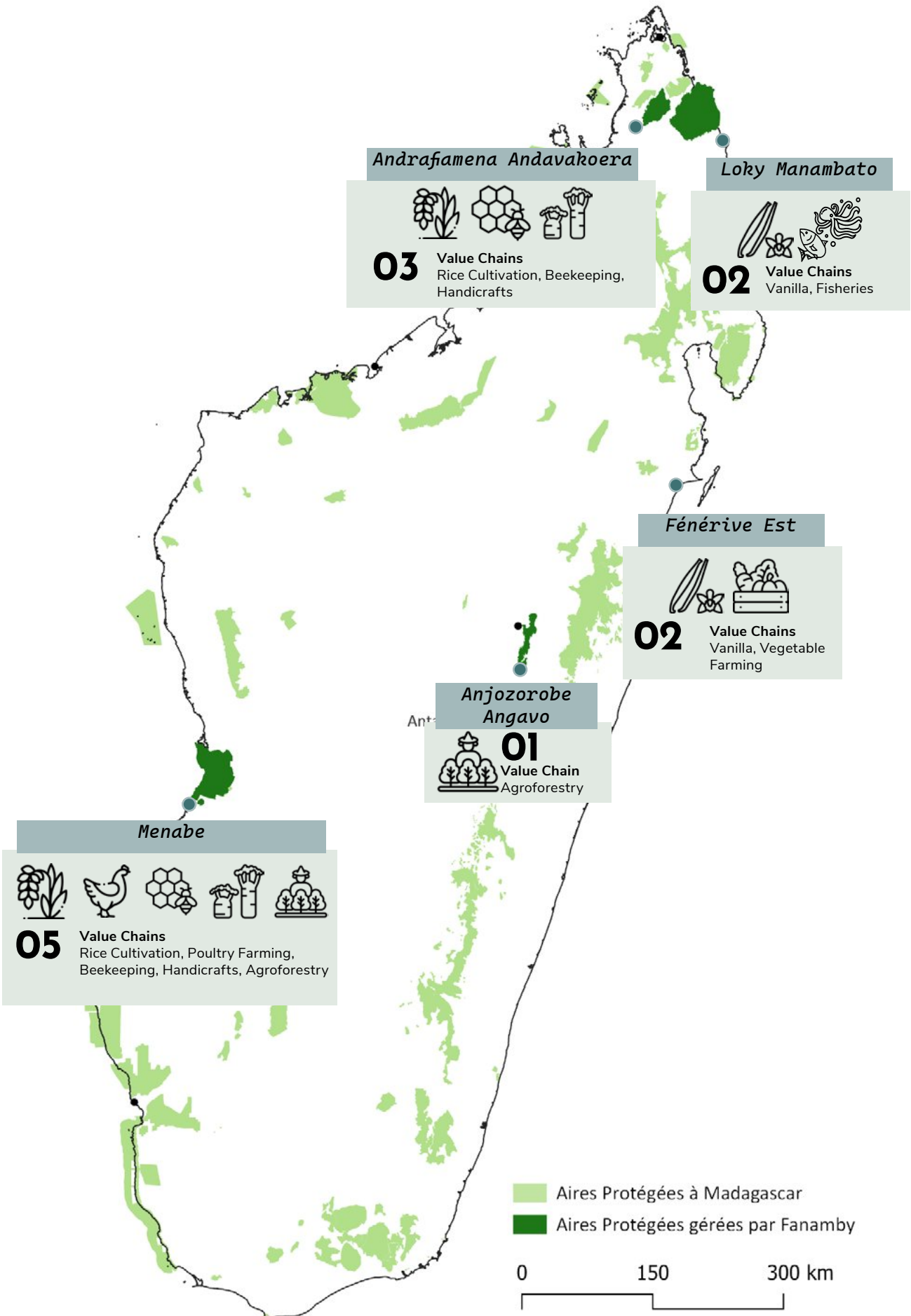




Photo credits : Fanamby | Sandy Ravalontiana

## PORTRAIT OF LOUISETTE ALBERT

Before joining the VSLA group and the vegetable farming cooperative, I lived day to day. I could not save money and it was hard to meet my family’s needs. The VSLA taught me how to manage my money, to save regularly, and to dare to take risks. With my first loan, I expanded my plot and started fishing, which improved our income.

Vegetable farming changed our daily life too. Now I can feed my family without buying vegetables at the market, and I sell the surplus.

Bit by bit, I was able to build my house, improve our diet, and ensure my children could go to school. These are things I never imagined possible before.

For me, the VSLA did not just change my income. It changed how I see the future and gave me the strength to think bigger.



**Louissette Albert**

VSLA Member  
Manompana, Fénérive Est

Louissette is a member of a vegetable farming group and a VSLA group in Manompana, in the Fénérive Est region. As a farmer and mother, she committed to these initiatives to improve her household’s living conditions and gain financial independence.



Photo credits: Velo Anselme

## ZAHANA HONEY: A PRODUCT IN HIGH DEMAND

In Andrafiarana, Zahana honey has become, in 2025, a symbol of community-led local development.

Rooted in improved beekeeping practices closely tied to protecting the area, it has gradually gained recognition beyond the producer villages.

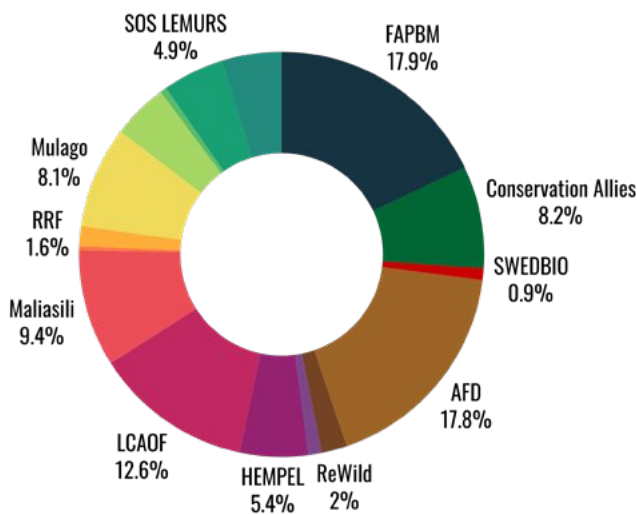
Faced with this attention, demand quickly grew. The beekeepers, however, reached their production limits, leading to stock shortages. This situation exposed the gap between market interest and the still-modest capacity of a sector still taking shape.

Rather than a setback, this moment was understood as an encouraging sign. It reveals the economic potential of a local, sustainable, quality product, one capable of generating income while valuing the forest.



Photo credits: Velo Anselme

# FINANCIAL HEALTH



Diversifying our donors and funding sources has been one of the pillars of our resilience in the face of the crises we faced this year.

If communities are one leg on which our work rests, funding is the other. This balance has allowed us to move forward despite the difficulties.

But beyond our ability to weather crises, our goal is to establish

conservation for the long term. We want to invest in sustaining the initiatives led by communities and by Fanamby.

This means in particular creating nature-positive value chains: economic activities that do not degrade ecosystems, but that instead contribute to restoring them.

These initiatives generate income for local communities while supporting conservation efforts.

With several partners, we are gradually building this financing model, so that conservation takes root sustainably in territories and in community values.

The ambition is simple: prosperous communities that protect their own natural wealth. A lasting conservation, capable of continuing even if, one day, Fanamby is no longer there.

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR TRUST

Our heartfelt thanks to all our donors and partners for their trust and support. Their commitment makes it possible to continue our conservation work and to support the communities who protect and nurture the protected areas every day.



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FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL



Photo credit : Vejo Anisime

## CONCLUSION

The year 2025, shaped by a complex political and social landscape, has given us a clearer picture of our conservation model and whether it can truly endure.

Beyond the measurable progress in reducing pressures and restoring habitats, what these efforts have really shown us is how essential it is to have communities actively involved in protecting their own territories.

At the same time, our work to organize economic value chains and strengthen savings groups has delivered real, if partial, solutions to the challenges facing rural families.

Sustainable farming, managed fishing, and craftwork have all helped diversify income and ease some of the pressure on natural resources.

These gains remain fragile, but they make clear why it matters to tie conservation to how people actually live, so that protecting the environment becomes part of everyday life for households.

The obstacles ahead are still substantial, especially when it comes to slash-and-burn farming and illegal activity in remote areas.

This tells us we need to keep pushing forward, but thoughtfully and realistically, by giving more technical support to local institutions and working more closely with the authorities.

The crises of 2025 have been revealing. They have shown that the co-management approach Fanamby champions really works, even as they remind us how much more work there is to do.

Building conservation that lasts means accepting this slow process, with all its dialogue, give-and-take, and collective effort, so that Madagascar's remarkable biodiversity can continue to flourish alongside the communities who guard it.



Photo credit : Velo Anselme



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