



**Together for a Just Future**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of Hand in Hand-Fund**





From left to right: **The Hand in Hand-Team** – Gila Kriegisch, Rapunzel Naturkost; Michael Spielmann, Executive Director DUH; Joseph Wilhelm, CEO Rapunzel Naturkost; Erika Blank, DUH; Jürgen Resch, Executive Director DUH; Michael Hadamczik, DUH; Harald Kächele, National Chairman DUH and Heike Kirsten, Rapunzel Naturkost

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**Cover:** Children in the Philippines planting trees for the future. Life-Giving-Forest e.V., Photographer: Benedikt Adler

## *For a Just World*

The Hand in Hand-Fund is celebrating its 15-year anniversary. With gratitude and joy we can take stock of our successful cooperation. Rapunzel Naturkost and the Deutsche Umwelthilfe (DUH) have created an exemplary support framework with sustainable results. Over the years we have continued to develop this project, collaboratively and successfully. And we plan to continue developing this project in the future.

Up to now, the fund has supported 176 ecological and social projects in 47 countries worldwide. Over the past 15 years, 780,000 Euros has been distributed to these selected projects.

The Hand in Hand-Fund has a clear signature: we support local, smaller-scale environmental and development projects. We aim to help people help themselves without bloated bureaucracy. Our goals correspond with those set forth in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals.

Our focus is on protecting the tropical rainforests and the oceans as well as combating desertification and erosion. These goals are reflected in the specific projects we're involved in, ranging from organic farming to supporting women, helping cover basic needs such as clean drinking water or energy supply, as well as providing education in sustainable development. The fund also regularly provides immediate aid for catastrophes and other emergencies.

We place great value on the interplay between education and social and environmental change. We believe that any truly sustainable improvement arises from this interaction. In addition, we are committed to supporting projects that, in the long run, strengthen the independence of civil societies.

Rapunzel came up with the idea of setting up the Hand in Hand -Fund and has also contributed the lion's share of the financing. One percent of the sales value of Hand in Hand raw materials goes into the fund. Additional funding comes from private donations and other campaigns within the organic food industry. The Deutsche Umwelthilfe manages the fund and organizes the implementation of the projects. The partners meet twice a year to review project applications and decide which ones will receive financial support.

In the following pages you will get a closer look at our work. Exemplary projects from around the world illustrate the tangible results arising from this fund. The regions where the various projects are located can be seen in the accompanying world map.

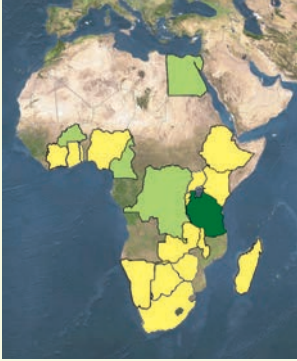
We appreciate your interest and would like to encourage you to contribute to the Hand in Hand-Fund based on your own personal financial means.



Joseph Wilhelm  
CEO Rapunzel Naturkost GmbH



Harald Kächele  
National Chairman Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V.



# Africa

## Tanzania *The Success Story of Hekima*

When Rapunzel Naturkost CEO and fund initiator, Joseph Wilhelm, visited the Hekima Girls School in November, 2011, he was overwhelmed by the reception. The school principal, Sister Esther Buberwa and the pupils, decked out in their pretty school uniforms, serenaded the visitor with a welcome song.



The Hekima Girls Secondary School is located near Bukowa in the catchment area of Lake Victoria. Education for women in the poor regions of Tanzania is by no means a given. This project, which the Hand in Hand Fund began sponsoring in 2003, has developed into a showcase project. The number of pupils has grown from 40 to 400 in this time. The quality of the school can be seen in the ranking of the students nationwide: the school received the top rating out of 4,000 schools. A new generation of self-confident women is growing up in Africa, and that's good news for the continent.

Joseph Wilhelm was able to get a first hand glimpse of the progress being made at the school. While the first allocations were used to build the school itself, later funding was used to realize larger projects that increased the size of the school facilities and improved standards. The girls used to have to collect and carry water over long distances and shower outdoors. Now there are washing



rooms and showers with running water. A new sewage system for the washrooms has improved hygienic standards. Two new buildings were added to store vegetables grown in the school's own gardens. The food is used to feed the almost 500 people, including teachers, involved with the school.

Even after Wilhelm's departure, time has not stood still at the *Hekima Girls' Secondary School*. At the end of 2013, *ISC Kon-*

*stanz e.V.* with the support of the Hand in Hand-Fund and additional funding from the *Roman Catholic Church, Diocese Rottenburg*, installed solar panels at the school. The sooty kerosene lamps which, up to then, had dimly lit the long African nights are now a thing of the past.



## Democratic Republic of the Congo

### A Sanctuary in War and Chaos

„Kisanga“ means island. For 12 traumatized women and an equal number of children, the welfare center of the same name on the outskirts of the city of Kisangani is an island of refuge. And they are in desperate need of protection and help in a country that has been in a permanent state of emergency for the past 20 years. A war has been raging over coltan ore which is mined in the resource-rich eastern part of the country. Without the tantal extracted from the ore, the entire electronics industry would come to a standstill. Many refugees have fled from the eastern border areas into the inland city of Kisangani.

The welfare center Kisanga, run by the organization *Association des Femmes pour le Développement (AFPD)*, is located there. It is a meeting place, accommodation, work and education center all rolled into one. Following the principle of helping people help themselves, it provides individuals

the opportunity to secure their own livelihood. The center has its own vegetable gardens, pastures and fish ponds. Sheep, goats and rabbits provide meat for the inhabitants and are sold at the local market. The school provides practical life skills in addition to teaching reading and writing.

The island refuge suffered some serious setbacks in 2011 due to an outbreak of cholera, contaminated water, the loss of all farm animals and the general unrest in the country. Thanks to the support of the German aid association *Kisanga e.V.* and the Hand in Hand-Fund, the center was able to obtain new animals and fresh seeds – the start-up capital for a new beginning.



## Malawi Only Paradise has no Fences

In order for humans and animals to live together in harmony, it is sometimes necessary to build a fence. To ensure that even elephants get the message, it should probably also be an electric fence. In the Salima District, southwest of the Malawi Lake, there is a solar-powered fence that informs the giant animals: up to this point but no further.

The 12 kilometer long fence keeps the animals in the Thuma Forest Reserve out of the adjacent villages. Simultaneously it helps to ensure the success of a long-term project to protect both the wild animals and the catchment area for the Malawi Lake. This project has been managed together by the nature protection organization, *Wildlife Action Group (WAGI e.V.)*,



and the National Forest Agency of Malawi since 1996.

The fact that many elephants have returned to the Thuma Forest Reserve is a major success. The flora and fauna of the reserve have also made a strong recovery thanks to a series of environmental measures. Unfortunately however, the elephants were regularly leaving the boundaries of the reserve and not only destroying the farmers' crops in the nearby villages, but even killing a number of people. Not surprisingly, the farmers' anger was directed at the animals. In the end WAGI and the farmers came up with the fence as a solution. With the support of the Hand in Hand-Fund, WAGI gamekeepers and men from the affected villages constructed the fence. Many people were thereby able to earn a living.



## Madagascar Nature's Treasure Chest

The goal of the nature organization *Naturefund e.V.* is to protect Madagascar's unique flora and at the same time provide farmers with an income. 80% of the plants on the world's fourth largest island are endemic. That means the vast majority of the 12,000 plant species exist only in this one place.

In order to protect the especially rare trees and plants, the Naturefund project takes a two-pronged approach. First, while carrying out reforestation, the land is also used for farming. Thus, melons and rice, for example, are grown between the saplings. Export products like vanilla, cinnamon,

coffee or cacao also thrive in these forest gardens.

Part of the project involves the development of a seed data bank. With the support of the Hand in Hand-Fund, the successes in Madagascar's subtropical southwest will be implemented elsewhere in the tropical islands by Naturefund along with its partner, the *Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG)*.

When the inhabitants learn to live both from and with nature, it could halt a destructive development. As in many other parts of the world, large swaths of forests in



Madagascar were cleared for farming and the harvesting of charcoal. Only 10% of the original vegetation is still intact. Thus the survival of this bright and shimmering plant and animal world with its baobabs, strepsirrhines, tortoises and chameleons is hanging by a silk thread.



## South Africa *You protect what you know*

The rhinoceros's horn is worth its weight in gold. It fetches similar prices on the Asian black market as a miracle cure for cancer and as a potency aid. No wonder that illegal hunting of these gray giants continues to increase. For those suffering from unemployment and poverty, the lucrative business is often too appealing to pass up.



The Somkhanda Community Game Reserve has come up with a novel way of dealing with this problem. After the end of

Apartheid, the 16,000 hectares area was awarded to the Gumbi Clan and converted into a nature preserve. The park provides ideal conditions for white and black rhinoceroses. But even here poaching is a serious problem.

To counteract this, the South African environmental organization *Wildlands Conservation Trust (WCT)*, in cooperation with their German partners *Global Nature Fund (GNF)*, have used two techniques to gain leverage. To protect the rhinos, GPS transmitters were implanted in the horns through a painless procedure. These transmitters help to locate the animals. Any unusual behaviour among the animals is picked up

by the gamekeepers, who can then intervene more quickly and easily. An alternative source of

income for the inhabitants might come from the development of sustainable wildlife tourism.

Workshops are provided to teach the local residents the value of protecting the rhinoceroses. Most children had never even seen a live animal in a reserve. "People protect what they know" is the motto of this project that is generously supported by the Hand in Hand-Fund.







# Asia

## *Tibet Surviving after the Earthquake*

The Tibetan nomads in the Himalayas have always had a hard life. But the living conditions at 4,500 meters have gotten even worse because of climate change. Significantly lower summer rainfall and winter temperatures as low as 40 degrees below zero test the endurance and resolve of the people. Additionally, in Chinese-ruled Tibet, there has been increasing pressure on the nomads to give up their traditional way of life.

A severe earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1 on the Richter scale in the East Tibetan province of Yashu in the spring of 2010 left numerous families homeless. Fortunately, many were able to find shelter in the Children and Culture House which, thanks to the support of the German organization *Aktion Lebensträume e.V.*, took root in this inhospitable region. Unfortunately the center itself suffered serious damage in the earthquake. Above all, the infirmary was in urgent need of repairs. The Hand in Hand-Fund was able to provide quick and straightforward emergency aid.

With the generous funds, the *Lebensträume* group was able to quickly renovate the infirmary and

even build additional medical treatment facilities. The center also purchased a small horse, allowing the local doctor, Ngawang, to more easily make emergency visits in the more remote mountain areas.

The center continues to grow. Thanks to German aid, a number of other essential projects could be carried out. These include the construction of a five meter deep well that ensures a consistent supply of

water for the inhabitants, a glass roof for a herb drying facility, as well as a heated schoolhouse where the children can be taught bilingually.

One important goal of the project is to support traditional Tibetan herbal medicine, including providing skills and knowledge about the medicinal plants and helping the local people to better market and sell their herbs.

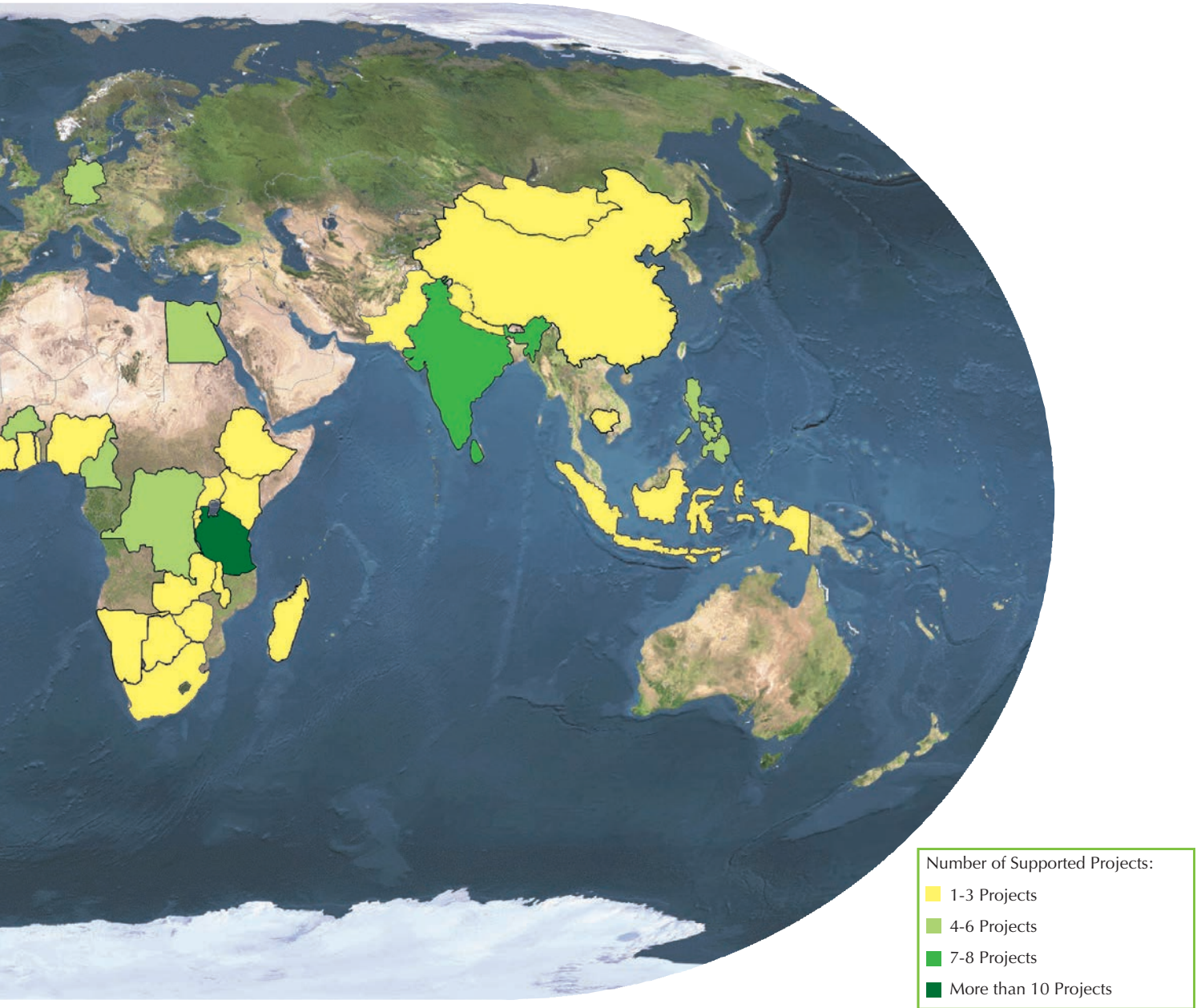


*Together for a Just World -*



Between 1998 to 2013 the fund donated **780,000 Euros** to 17

## - 15<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of the Hand in Hand-Fund



76 ecological and social projects in 47 countries worldwide.

## India Solar Power for Clean Drinking Water

Children are our future. Yet, they can only have a good future when their basic needs are met. At the top of the list is access to clean drinking water. Contaminated water is the main cause of numerous illnesses and the generally poor health conditions of people living in developing countries. In particular, Cholera epidemics continue to occur. This is a major challenge for people and a fundamental roadblock for development in the affected regions.

The Upper Primary School of Kalapetty in the South Indian state of Kerala primarily serves “Dalit” children. “Dalits”, once referred to as “untouchables”, are one of the poorest castes in India. Education is a means to help them escape poverty. Besides education, the school also provides

many of the pupils with their only warm meal of the day. Before 2011, however, the school had no access to clean cooking or drinking water. They simply used the water from the river, which was piped, unfiltered, into an old cement tank. The intense heat of southern India often caused the water to become contaminated.

Thanks to the support of the Hand in Hand-Fund, the school now has its own solar-powered drinking water treatment plant. The plant was installed by the *International Solar Research Center (ISC Konstanz e.V.)* in Konstanz, Germany. The use of solar energy is important because it provides a reliable and independent source of electricity in a region plagued by power outages. The water treatment system purifies the

river water using the R/O (reverse osmosis) process and pipes the water into a new 100-liter water tank made of stainless steel. The days of contaminated water are over.

In order to support the local economy, ISC purchased most of the parts necessary for the plant in India. The water treatment plant was installed in 2011 and the solar system began operating at the beginning of 2012. ISC is a non-profit solar research center involved in development cooperation projects and has been a partner of the Hand in Hand-Fund in multiple countries.



## Cambodia Fishing without Dynamite

The communities along the Tonle Sap Lake live with and from the water. Yet the traditional way of life in the catchment area of the Mekong is in danger. The ecosystem is suffering from the consequences of dam building, the discharge of wastewater and the increased use of industrial fishing methods. In many areas, dynamite fishing has become widespread. This underwater clear cutting has had disastrous effects.

The largest lake in Southeast Asia is a paradise of biodiversity and provides humans with an abundance of food. It is the most bountiful fishing lake in the world, including more than 200 fish species, 13 turtles and 23 kinds of snakes.

In order to keep things that way, the *Global Nature Fund (GNF)* and the *Fisheries Action Coalition Team (FACT)* have initiated an on-site project to promote sustainable fishing and ecotourism on the Tonle Sap. Fifty locals who make a living from fishing, the majority of them women, have become involved in the introduction of sustainable natural resource practices.

This group is now returning to traditional forms of fishing that include the use of fish cages. Another factor that can help the sustainable use of the water is ecotourism, which offers women especially an alternative form of income.

The Global Nature Fund is an international foundation focussing on the environment.

They are located on Lake Constance in southern Germany and work in close partnership with the *Deutsche Umwelthilfe*. The focus of the GNF is on creating the worldwide network known as *Living Lakes*.



## Mongolia Sea-Buckthorn on the shores of the Ongi

Desertification is a major global ecological problem. This can be seen clearly in the Övörkhongai province of Mongolia, where deserts are rapidly claiming land traditionally used for farming. Climate change has certainly been an important factor, but mining and poor water management prac-

tices have also worsened the situation.

A new project aims to slow the process of desertification by the introduction of Sea-Buckthorn trees.

These trees are known not only for their tasty and vitamin rich juice, but also for

their deep and extensive root system that functions as an excellent water reservoir. These trees in the Oleaster family help to reduce erosion and thus the increase of arid land. And they happen to thrive in the tough Mongolian climate.

Based on this knowledge, *The United Movement of Mongolian Rivers* in partnership with the *Global Nature Fund (GNF)* is attempting to plant the Sea-Buckthorn to counteract desertification. The Hand in Hand-Fund is sponsoring this project.

Gachinorolbo Oyungerel, originally trained as a tractor driver, is the first gardener to plant the Sea-Buckthorn trees along the Ongi River. The goal is to see 1,200 new trees lining the shores of the Ongi in the next few years.



## *Pakistan Vegetables in the Desert*



The desert wetland area of Deh Akro-II is a unique water ecosystem in the desert, containing sand dunes, small lakes and swamps. Many endangered animal species, including the Houbara Bustard and the Mugger Crocodile are endemic here. There is even a bit of arable land that can be used for farming. Unfortunately there is a danger of overusing this fragile ecosystem. In the struggle for survival in this unforgiving landscape, humans bring their cattle to graze along the shores of the lakes, unaware that they are destroying the few shrubs and trees which are essential for the survival of the ecosystem.

The Pakistani environmental organisation *SANGAT Development Foundation* together with the *Global Nature Fund (GNF)* started a model project with the aim of

making sustainable farming possible in the wetlands. This project is supported by the Hand in Hand-Fund.

The Pakistani nature conservationists have worked together with the local populations in the villages of Eidan Bhatti and Muhammad Yousif Dahri to set up the basics of vegetable farming. The result was a series of gardens producing potatoes, onions, eggplants and pumpkins. Water-saving drip irrigation provided the plants with moisture. The sustainable use of the land and the knowledge of the people are

helping to conserve the desert wetlands.



## *The Philippines New Forest on Clear Cut Land*

Poverty and fast population growth encouraged the inhabitants of Mandanao Island to cut down the tropical rain forest. However on the clear cut land a new development is underway: a cooperative of handicapped persons is now planting near-natural mixed forests on special demonstration sites. The project is helping to give an abused ecosystem a new start, while providing work and income to an underprivileged group.

Handicapped persons do not have many opportunities for education and work in the Philippines. The Foundation for *The-seAbled Inc. (FTI)* came up with the idea for the reforestation project together with the German organization *Life-Giving-Forest e.V.* Support came from the Hand in Hand-Fund.

The cooperative's forest on Mandanao is expected to produce its first harvest of timber in about ten years. Their own carpenter's workshop plans to produce, among other things, chairs for schools.

However it will still take quite some time before the new mixed forest is able to provide the ecosystem with the new start. Typhoon Haiyan, which hit the count-

ry in late 2013, left much damage in its wake. Thanks to the help of FTI members, the carpenters were able to rebuild the cooperative's wooden houses.





# America

## Costa Rica Forest at the Source of the Rio Nosara

Tropical forests have always covered the mountains at the source of the Rio Nosara on the Nicoya Peninsula in northwest Costa Rica. For the residents of the village of Hojancha, the river is the most important source of drinking water.

The forest was almost completely cleared in the 1980s to make room for cattle grazing land. The Rio Nosara began to lose water and, by the end of the dry season, the river bed was suddenly completely dried up.

This led a group of local citizens to form an action group which later became the *Fundacion Pro Reserva Forestal Monte Alto (FMA)*. With the support of the German environmental organization *Tropica Verde e.V.*, they were able to secure a 924 hectare piece of land that later became known as the Monte Alto Forest Reserve.

One of the main focuses of the fundacion is the reforestation of the reserve with endemic trees. The group has been able to successfully carry out the project despite various obstacles. Water now flows along the Rio Nosara the whole year through. Yet the Hojanchenos know that this success can only be sustained if the next generation is sensitized to the importance of nature

protection and the expansion of the Zona Protectora Monte Alto. Thus, environmental education is the organization's second focus. Numerous workshops and courses are offered to the local population, focusing, for example, on water quality issues, how to deal with solid and liquid waste, the effects of climate change on the Monte

Alto or the importance of endemic species in reforestation projects.

The Hand in Hand-Fund has been a major supporter of the project. One sign of their involvement and success is the view of the environmental center rising high above the reservation.





## Brazil On the Nut Trail

When the rainy season in December or January is over, the paths through the Brazilian rainforest are once again passable. Now is the time for the men of the Tenharim and Diahoi indigenous tribes to go off on foot to collect the Brazil nuts. These nuts do not grow on large plantations but on trees that grow wild somewhere in the jungle. Each family has its own ancestral trees but the way to the trees is often quite long.

The trees drop capsules the size of handballs, each containing as many as 30 seeds, from the more than 40-meter high trees as early as October or November. Transporting the seeds, better known as Brazil nuts, with backpacks or by boat is a difficult endeavour. Yet it is more the process of drying and storing the nuts that creates the biggest problem for the people.

With the support of the Hand in Hand-Fund, the *working group known as Regenwald und Artenschutz (ARA e.V.)* has been able to significantly improve the situation for the Diahoi and Tenharim. The tribes now own motor brush cutters to clear the paths to the trees. With the help of a new motor boat, they can now more easily get to the hard to reach spots along the river. The families were also able to build a new storage and drying facility which has improved the quality of the nuts and increased the incomes of the families.



## Bolivia *The True Gold of the Incas*



Quinoa is a traditional South American grain akin to rye or wheat in Europe and one of the basic foods for the peoples in the Bolivian highlands. However, cheap grain imports had almost completely wiped out the Quinoa farming industry. Mean-

while, the increase in demand for fair trade products has helped turn the tables. The cooperative *Anapqui* in the catchment area of the salt lake of Uyuni at 3,500m altitude is again growing the true Inca gold in large quantities.

The importance of this development for the poorest regions of South America is difficult to measure. Most of the inhabitants here can't read or write and many of them speak only the local languages of Aymara but not Spanish. Rapunzel Naturkost in Germany purchases more than 200 tons of Quinoa annually from the cooperative, helping the locals earn a steady income according to the basic tenets of the Hand in Hand partnership philosophy.

The cooperative has already been supported by the Hand in Hand-Fund of which Rapunzel is both the initiator and the main financial supporter. The fund is run jointly with the Deutsche Umwelthilfe.

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## Peru *Dolphins off the Coast of Paracas*

The area near the famous Paracas Peninsula in south Peru is a hotspot for biodiversity. The region already boasts two nature reservations with marine sections. Still, the area has its share of environmental problems. The coastal waters are besieged with unfiltered waste water and poisons, and the beaches are littered with plastic rubbish. Dynamite fishing is an illegal yet common form of fishing that brings

in quick money but destroys important fish habitats.

The Peruvian Marine Protection Organization *ACOREMA* runs a marine protection center in the city of Pisco. Here they provide education regarding the protection of dolphins and sustainable fishing methods in the waters around Paracas. *ACOREMA* is carrying out a very unusual project: a long-term monitoring study of two dolphin

pods. The health of these highly-developed mammals provides information about the ecological state of the ocean. The monitoring helps to better understand the inter-relationships in the oceans and provides early detection of any changes occurring there.

*ACOREMA* needed immediate help after a severe earthquake struck the area in 2007. The Munich-based *Gesellschaft zur Ret-*

ung der Delfine (GRD e.V.) was able to coordinate the help from Germany with the support of the Hand in Hand-Fund. In the proceeding years, additional funds were used for various projects including a campaign against dynamite fishing and an environmental education project in over 60 schools in the regions. ACOREMA's next goal is to try and tackle the problem of plastic waste in the ocean.



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