

Sponsorship Call for the Reintroduction and Monitoring of Desert Crocodiles (*Crocodylus suchus*)



Credits: juvenile specimen of *Crocodylus suchus*. Michel Ansermet (AQUATIS)

This document serves as a **call for sponsors** to support the groundbreaking reintroduction and monitoring project of the *Crocodylus suchus* in Morocco. Your contribution will play a critical role in making this conservation effort a reality, directly supporting the survival of a species that was once on the brink of extinction.

Project Summary:

On June 12, 2024, a remarkable conservation initiative began as 16 young sacred crocodiles (*Crocodylus suchus*) were transported from AQUATIS Aquarium in Switzerland to Morocco, their ancestral homeland. These animals, once on the brink of extinction, will be reintroduced into their natural habitat. Before their release, the crocodiles will undergo a critical acclimatization and quarantine period lasting approximately one year, preparing them for their eventual rewilding in June 2025.

Why this project matters:

The reintroduction of *Crocodylus suchus* is a critical step towards restoring a species that has long been extinct in Morocco. Beyond saving these remarkable creatures, their return to the wild will have profound ecological benefits. As apex predators, these crocodiles play a vital role in maintaining the balance of ecosystems. Their reintroduction will restore the natural equilibrium of the habitat, strengthening biodiversity.

However, releasing predators into the wild requires careful planning to avoid conflicts with human activities. This project uses cutting-edge GPS technology to monitor the crocodiles' movements and behaviors, ensuring their safe reintegration. Additionally, by collecting open-source GPS data, we are creating a valuable repository of information about the behaviors of *Crocodylus suchus* in their natural environment. This data will be available to the scientific community, contributing to broader conservation efforts, while also allowing donors to follow the animals in real-time. This unique feature offers donors a direct and personal connection to the project, providing them with valuable insights into the progress of these crocodiles as they adapt to the wild.

Your impact:

Your contribution will directly support the reintroduction of *Crocodylus suchus* into the wild, helping secure the future of this species and contributing to global biodiversity. With your help, we can ensure these ancient reptiles will once again thrive in their natural habitat, fulfilling their ecological role for generations to come.

Join us in making a difference:

By supporting this project, you become part of a groundbreaking conservation effort, one that not only saves a species but also fosters harmony between wildlife and humans. Together, we can ensure that *Crocodylus suchus* is not just a part of history, but a thriving species for the future.

Project Goals:

1. **Reintroduction of *Crocodylus suchus* into the wild:** the primary goal of this project is to successfully reintroduce *Crocodylus suchus* into the wild, restoring a species that had disappeared from Morocco. This initiative aims to re-establish their presence in their ancestral habitat and re-integrate them into the local ecosystem, which will benefit from their role as apex predators. The reintroduction is a critical step towards both species conservation and ecosystem restoration.
2. **Tracking and behavior analysis:** equipped with GPS collars developed in collaboration with leading institutions (HES-SO Valais Wallis), each crocodile will be tracked post-release to monitor its movement, habitat usage, and activity. The collected data will be shared as open-source information, enabling the scientific community to better understand crocodile behavior in the wild. This knowledge is essential for future conservation initiatives. Additionally, donors will have the ability to follow the crocodiles' movements in real-time, giving them a unique window into the progress and success of the reintroduction efforts.
3. **Human-wildlife conflict mitigation:** using real-time GPS data, we aim to predict and prevent potential conflicts between humans and crocodiles. By tracking their movements, we can alert communities of any crocodile presence near populated areas, ensuring safety and fostering coexistence. The open-source data will also aid in developing strategies for minimizing human-wildlife conflict in other regions.
4. **Education and outreach:** the project will create a web platform where both the public and donors can follow the crocodiles' journey. This not only educates the public about conservation efforts but also builds support for ongoing endangered species preservation. By providing access to GPS tracking data, we offer donors an engaging way to stay connected to the project and witness its impact firsthand. Additionally, educational activities will be conducted at AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium in Lausanne, where visitors can learn about the project, the importance of species conservation, and the technological tools used in wildlife monitoring. These activities will raise awareness about the vital role of *Crocodylus suchus* in its ecosystem and inspire broader public participation in conservation initiatives.

Timeline Overview:

October 2024 - February 2025: preparation and testing of GPS collars for fit and use at AQUATIS in Lausanne.

January 2025 - March 2025: preparation of data collection web service, and development of scientific and popular web pages to engage both experts and the general public.

January 2025 - June 2025: scientific support provided to AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium to ensure the proper preparation of the animals for their release in June 2025.

June 2025: travel to Morocco to equip the animals with GPS collars and release them into their natural habitat.

June 2025 - December 2025: first six months of post-release monitoring, collecting essential data on the crocodiles' adaptation.

December 2025: presentation of the monitoring results for the first six months, sharing insights with both the scientific community and the public.

2026 and 2027: continuous monitoring of the crocodiles, with regular updates and information shared through popularized scientific communications.

End of 2027: Public presentation of the entire mission and final study results, highlighting the conservation success and lessons learned.

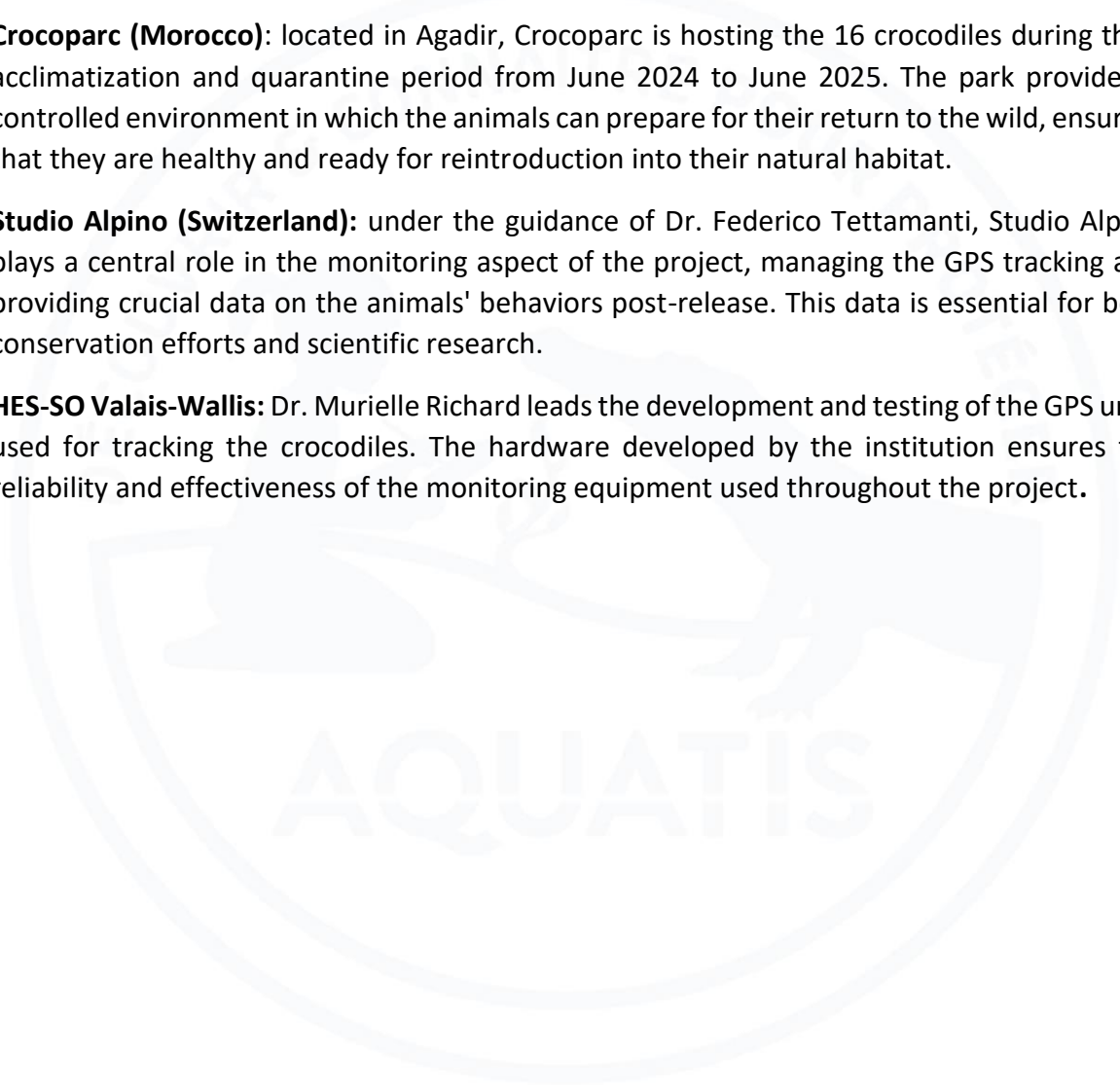
Project Partners:

AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium (Lausanne): led by Mr. Michel Ansermet, AQUATIS provides expertise on animal care and reintroduction preparation, ensuring that the crocodiles are properly acclimatized before their release into the wild.

Crocoparc (Morocco): located in Agadir, Crocoparc is hosting the 16 crocodiles during their acclimatization and quarantine period from June 2024 to June 2025. The park provides a controlled environment in which the animals can prepare for their return to the wild, ensuring that they are healthy and ready for reintroduction into their natural habitat.

Studio Alpino (Switzerland): under the guidance of Dr. Federico Tettamanti, Studio Alpino plays a central role in the monitoring aspect of the project, managing the GPS tracking and providing crucial data on the animals' behaviors post-release. This data is essential for both conservation efforts and scientific research.

HES-SO Valais-Wallis: Dr. Murielle Richard leads the development and testing of the GPS units used for tracking the crocodiles. The hardware developed by the institution ensures the reliability and effectiveness of the monitoring equipment used throughout the project.



Project needs:

To achieve these goals, we require financial support to cover the following key components:

Development and testing of GPS collars prototype: CHF 15'000

A request for support to Innosuisse (Innocheque) for the development and testing of GPS collars prototype is currently underway. This phase is critical for ensuring that the collars are durable, functional, and capable of providing accurate data on the movements and behaviors of the reintroduced crocodiles in their natural habitat.

Production of 16 GPS Collars: CHF 32'000

This covers the production costs of 16 collars, including leak tests and scientific support to ensure the collars are fully operational in aquatic and terrestrial environments. Each collar will be rigorously tested to withstand the environmental conditions in Morocco, while still delivering precise GPS data until 2027.

Installation and Monitoring in Morocco: CHF 35'000

These funds will cover travel expenses, transportation of the animals, communication infrastructure, and the involvement of scientific and media teams. This phase will also include the deployment of the GPS collars on the crocodiles and the commencement of monitoring. It will be a crucial period for ensuring that the animals adapt well to their natural surroundings, and that their interactions with the ecosystem are properly documented.

Web platform development: CHF 3'500

The project will feature a dedicated web platform where the public and donors can follow the crocodiles' journey in real-time through GPS tracking data. The platform will also provide regular updates on the animals' progress, behavior, and adaptation to the wild. A detailed sponsor and supporter page will recognize the contributions of key partners and donors, ensuring their visibility and highlighting their essential role in the success of the project. This platform will serve as an interactive hub, fostering engagement and transparency throughout the conservation mission.

Scientific research and documentation: CHF 8'500

This funding is necessary for the thorough documentation of the entire reintroduction process, including data collection, analysis, and publication of findings in both scientific and public formats. The scientific results will contribute valuable information to conservation research, particularly on the behavior of reintroduced species in the wild.

Project management and field monitoring: CHF 26'000

Effective project management and field monitoring are crucial to the success of this conservation effort. This includes coordination among partners, regular checks on the progress of the reintroduction, management of field teams, and overseeing all logistics associated with the project in both Morocco and Switzerland.

Educational and outreach activities: CHF 42'000

A significant portion of this project involves public engagement and education. These funds will support educational programs at AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium in Lausanne, public awareness campaigns, and the development of outreach materials that highlight the importance of species conservation. The project will involve school visits, workshops, and public talks that not only inform but also inspire future generations to engage in conservation efforts. Additionally, the outreach activities will be aligned with the web platform to ensure the broader public can follow the progress and success of the project in real time.

Total Funding Required: CHF 162'000

Sponsorship Program for the reintroduction and monitoring of sacred crocodiles

We offer an exclusive sponsorship program designed to recognize the contributions of our valued supporters. Each sponsorship tier offers unique opportunities for visibility, engagement, and involvement in this groundbreaking conservation project.

Platinum Sponsor (CHF 30'000+)

Exclusive Benefits:

Logo Placement: prominent placement of your logo on the project's web platform, featured on the homepage and all major sections.

AQUATIS display: your logo will be prominently displayed in the dedicated project section at AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium in Lausanne, seen by thousands of visitors.

Data access: free access to GPS tracking data on the crocodiles, which can be used for your company's own communications and marketing efforts.

Field involvement: two representatives from your organization will have the opportunity to join the crocodile release in June 2025 in Morocco, with professional photos provided for your own use.

Media features: your company will be highlighted in press releases and media coverage related to the project.

Private tour: A guided VIP tour at AQUATIS for your organization (max 50 participants), highlighting the conservation work and project milestones.

Annual entrance: as part of your sponsorship, you will receive 10 annual entrance passes to AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium, granting exclusive access for your team or guests to experience the fascinating world of aquatic life and learn about our conservation efforts firsthand.

Gold Sponsor (CHF 15'000 - CHF 29'999)

Exclusive Benefits:

Logo Placement: prominent placement of your logo on the project's web platform, featured on the homepage and all major sections.

AQUATIS display: your logo will be prominently displayed in the dedicated project section at AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium in Lausanne, seen by thousands of visitors.

Data access: free access to GPS tracking data on the crocodiles, which can be used for your company's own communications and marketing efforts.

Crocodile release participation: one representative from your organization will be invited to witness the crocodile release in June 2025, including professional photos for your own communication.

Media mentions: mention of your sponsorship in press releases and project reports.

Annual entrance: as part of your sponsorship, you will receive 5 annual entrance passes to AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium, granting exclusive access for your team or guests to experience the fascinating world of aquatic life and learn about our conservation efforts firsthand.

Silver Sponsor (CHF 8'000 - CHF 14'999)

Exclusive Benefits:

Logo placement: your logo will be featured on the sponsors' page of the web platform, with visibility on updates related to the project.

AQUATIS display: your company's name will be listed in the project display at AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium.

Access to updates: receive quarterly updates on the project's progress and insights from the GPS data, allowing your organization to stay informed and share conservation news with your community.

Acknowledgement: your company will be acknowledged in the project's official reports.

Annual entrance: as part of your sponsorship, you will receive 3 annual entrance passes to AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium, granting exclusive access for your team or guests to experience the fascinating world of aquatic life and learn about our conservation efforts firsthand.

Bronze Sponsor (CHF 4'000 - CHF 7'999)

Exclusive Benefits:

Logo placement: your logo will be featured on the sponsors' page of the project's web platform.

AQUATIS display: Your company's name will appear in the project display at AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium.

Project updates: you will receive bi-annual email updates on the crocodiles' progress and the conservation work, which you can share with your audience.

Certificate of contribution: a digital certificate acknowledging your company's support of this important conservation project.

Annual entrance: as part of your sponsorship, you will receive 2 annual entrance passes to AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium, granting exclusive access for your team or guests to experience the fascinating world of aquatic life and learn about our conservation efforts firsthand.

Supporter (CHF 1'000 - CHF 3'999)

Exclusive Benefits:

Acknowledgement: your company's name will be listed on the supporter section of the project's web platform.

Digital updates: receive annual email updates on the project's achievements and progress, with information you can share with your network.

Certificate of support: a digital certificate recognizing your contribution to the conservation of *Crocodylus suchus*.

Annual entrance: as part of your sponsorship, you will receive 1 annual entrance pass to AQUATIS Vivarium Aquarium, granting exclusive access for your team or guests to experience the fascinating world of aquatic life and learn about our conservation efforts firsthand.

Each tier offers scalable benefits that allow sponsors to engage meaningfully with the project, receive recognition, and use the conservation effort for their own communication and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

Interested in supporting this Mission?

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor or want to learn more about how you can support the reintroduction of *Crocodylus suchus*, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your contribution can make a real difference in ensuring the survival of this remarkable species and contributing to global biodiversity.

Contact Us:

AQUATIS Foundation

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We look forward to discussing how you can be a part of this groundbreaking conservation effort