

Endangered Monkeys

Besides our important education project, the same island also includes the rehabilitation of seven species of endangered primates. With sufficient numbers of each species, they will be re-populating into their original habitats.

The objectives are to save these species as well as to help indigenous people derive income from tourists who come to Ecuador on adventure travel tours. The project director, Hector Vargas, is a long-time tour guide and is affiliated with the Yachana Lodge along the Napo River where tourists come to experience the Amazon.

Our goal is to increase the number of healthy primates (from seven different species) which can live, grow, and multiply in the "wild" versus in captivity. Although there are some attempts in Ecuador at breeding and growing these kinds of animals in cages, we believe that their genetic and environmental behaviors will better mirror pre-human impacts if they are allowed to live in the wild, on a protected island of 115 hectares.

Specifically, over the next five years, at least 70 monkeys, 10 from each species will be brought and introduced to the island environment. They will be monitored by a forester and volunteers from GVI (Global Vision International).

Monitoring

With further progression of the project, Amazon State University monitoring records will be done daily, weekly, and monthly to ensure that their survival rate is high. When primates have babies, they will all be carefully monitored. If there is a health problem, the sick or hurt animal will be treated and observed by Project Consultant Medardo Tapia Roman, a zoo-technician from the Centro de Recursos Tecnológicos Fátima.

When the population of each species reaches a certain size, some monkeys will be re-introduced to natural habitats in other parts of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Success Indicators

Success will be measured by the number of babies which survive more than two years and the number of species that produce enough numbers (approximately 70) to be transferred to other protected sanctuaries elsewhere in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Success will also depend on increasing eco-tourism and other businesses that help preserve habitat and support local businesses generate sufficient income to support this project on a sustainable basis.