

# Caméléon Center Conservation

Swiss NGO recognised as being of public utility, carrying out  
*in situ* and *ex situ* conservation initiatives with an international focus.



## 1. Introduction and highlights

Caméléon Center Conservation (CCC) is a Swiss non-profit organisation committed to the research and conservation of chameleons on an international scale. The year 2025 represents a milestone and marks a **change of scale**, both scientifically and in terms of its institutional and territorial roots:

- launch of projects at **new sites** in Madagascar and Morocco in collaboration with new partners;
- launch of **unprecedented scientific projects**, including the first long-term radio tracking programme of Parson's chameleon in its natural habitat;
- significant **strengthening of the team** (two new steering committee members, two project managers, seven Master's students), development of **11 new institutional partnerships**, with the integration of chameleon specialists into the **IUCN** group;
- intensification of **scientific communication** and **awareness-raising** activities.
- **Direct ex-situ awareness impact** estimated at approximately 100,000 visitors in Europe.
- **Strengthened local economic impact**: 70% of 2025 expenditure was reinvested directly for the benefit of local communities.
- **Consolidation of scientific achievements** since 2023 at four sites, with more than 1,200 chameleons recorded (20 species) and more than 1,400 km covered on foot.
- Strengthening **international collaboration** in our missions, which this year involved 20 researchers of five different nationalities (these figures include researchers working at several sites during the year).

Through these actions, the CCC is gradually strengthening its recognition in research, conservation and awareness-raising dedicated to chameleons, based on a rigorous scientific approach, a continuous presence in the field and close collaboration with local communities.



Young Parson's chameleon (*Calumma parsonii*) observed in the Vohimana reserve in eastern Madagascar (Photo: Martin Etave)

## 2. Mission, vision, values and governance

### Our vision

To ensure the sustainable conservation of chameleons and the forest ecosystems on which they depend, by strengthening the long-term involvement of local communities and scientific institutions.

### Our missions

- To study chameleon species, particularly those most threatened in their natural habitat.
- Develop and implement concrete, measurable and evaluable conservation programmes.
- Support local organisations in the sustainable management of forests and associated landscapes.
- Produce and disseminate scientific knowledge essential to species protection.
- Promote ethical conservation combining field research, applied approaches and awareness-raising.



Triceros Jacksoni (Photo: Rayane Vulliamin)

### Our values

- Scientific rigour: validated protocols, robust and reproducible data.
- Ethics and animal welfare: compliance with international standards and best practices.
- Collaboration: networking with NGOs, universities, local communities and zoological institutions.
- Transparency: clear communication of results, partnerships and impacts.
- Local commitment: training, support and promotion of Malagasy and Moroccan stakeholders.

### Team reinforcement in 2025

The year 2025 saw several new arrivals, strengthening the CCC's scientific and operational expertise.



Part of our CCC team on a field mission with guides from the Vohimana reserve (Photo: Day Nabih)



Dr Benjamin Drouet, a veterinary specialist in wildlife, joined the CCC as veterinary supervisor. Currently a veterinarian at the Besançon Museum, his expertise in infectious diseases and his experience with Madagascan wildlife strengthen the health monitoring of chameleons, both *in situ* and *ex situ*. Dr Angelinah René de Roland, a Madagascan biologist and lecturer-researcher at the University of Toliara, has become scientific coordinator in Madagascar. She plays a key role in providing academic support to Madagascan students and strengthening links between the CCC and local universities.

The operational team has also been expanded with Michaël Ramalanjaona, project manager in Madagascar, and Karen Luna Curiel, fundraising manager.

At the same time, in 2025 the CCC contributed to the academic training of seven Master's students (five Madagascan and two Swiss) involved in field projects. Training the next generation of scientists is a fundamental part of the association's DNA.

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## 3. In situ projects and activities

### 3.1. Madagascar – Vohimana Reserve

The Vohimana Reserve is notable for its exceptional diversity of chameleons. Several projects have been carried out there since 2023 in partnership with the National Museum of Natural History – Paris Zoo and the NGO L'Homme et l'Environnement.

#### **Project Inventory and microclimatic conditions of chameleons**

The compilation of data, resulting from a major field effort conducted since 2023, has led to the drafting of a scientific article entitled "Distribution and microclimatic conditions of chameleons in the Vohimana reserve", which is currently being validated for publication. Additional work on assessing population density was carried out by Bora Kanoso Alzeid of the University of Tulear as part of his Master's degree.

#### **Plant-chameleon relations project**

Colin Ruffieux of the University of Neuchâtel has completed his Master's thesis on the relationship between vegetation structure and habitat use by chameleons. He proposes concrete recommendations for forest management that could promote the conservation of *Brookesia* microhabitats. These measures are currently being discussed with the reserve as part of its reforestation programmes.



Mission to equip Parson's chameleons (*Calumma parsonii*) with transmitters in the Vohimana reserve in July 2025 (Photo: Day Nabih)

### Scientific monitoring project for Parson's chameleon (*Calumma parsonii*)

The year 2025 marks a major turning point for the scientific monitoring of Parson's chameleon with the first comprehensive health assessment of wild populations, the launch of a long-term radio tracking programme and the implementation of a protocol based on microclimate recorders integrating temperature, humidity and UV exposure. At the same time, a Master's thesis by Corentin Schürch of the University of Neuchâtel is exploring the use of agroforestry landscapes in comparison with primary forests.

This project, dedicated to the world's largest chameleon, also provides supervision for two new Madagascan Master's students, Nourally Liantsoa and Sherida Rasoanirina from the University of Tulear. It paves the way for the acquisition of new data on microhabitats, home ranges, seasonal activity, and the relationships between health status, population density, and habitat quality.

#### Cumulative impacts in Vohimana (since 2023)

- 12 researchers involved (including 5 Madagascans)
- 700 km covered on foot
- 1,000 chameleons recorded (13 species)
- 400 daily accommodation/catering packages
- 600 days of paid guiding
- 6 Master's students supervised (including 4 Madagascans)



Calumma parsonii catfisher (Photo: Michael Ramalanjanina)

### 3.2. Madagascar – Iaroka Forest

Thanks to a new collaboration with IMPACT Madagascar and the village association VOI Iaroka, the CCC has begun the first inventory of chameleons at this site located in the east of the country.

#### Species inventory project

In the first few weeks, seven species of chameleons were identified, highlighting the site's rich herpetological diversity. The project closely involves local organisations and generates direct economic benefits (guiding, accommodation, catering), while strengthening local skills in biodiversity monitoring.

#### Direct impacts in Iaroka (since 2025)

- 3 researchers involved (including 2 Madagascans)
- 123 km travelled
- 97 chameleons recorded (7 species)
- 60 daily accommodation/catering packages
- 15 days of paid guiding
- 1 Madagascan Master's student supervised



Field meeting with our partners IMPACT Madagascar and VOI Iaroka to organise the first chameleon inventory mission in Iaroka



### 3.3. Madagascar – Makay Massif

In partnership with Naturevolution, the CCC participated in the first chameleon inventory missions in the Makay Massif, which has been little studied to date. These missions, carried out in May–June 2025, are part of a comprehensive programme aimed at the official protection of the massif.

#### Direct impacts in Makay (since 2025)

- 2 researchers involved (including 1 Madagascan)
- 300 km covered
- 134 chameleons recorded (3 species)
- 21 Madagascan eco-guards trained



Training of Makay eco-guards in collaboration with Naturevolution in May 2025

### 3.4. Morocco – The common chameleon

The year 2025 marked the launch of a structuring project dedicated to the common chameleon (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*), combining ecology, seizure management, local monitoring and analysis of cultural uses. This project is the first CCC implementation on the African continent, in partnership with Fauna Morocco.

This initial exploratory mission enabled an initial assessment of threats to be made and laid the scientific and partnership foundations necessary for the gradual roll-out of a medium- and long-term conservation programme in collaboration with local academic and associative partners such as Morocco Herpetology - Ibn Zohr University in Taroudant - Abdellah Bouazza and the La Perle aux Oiseaux animal refuge.

#### Direct impacts in Morocco (since 2025)

- 4 researchers involved (including 2 Moroccans)
- 500 km travelled
- 50 chameleons recorded
- No socio-economic indicators yet as the project is still under development



Measurements taken of common chameleons (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*) in Morocco in September 2025 (Photo: Rayane Vuillemin)

## 4. *Ex situ* activities

The CCC's *ex situ* activities are explicitly part of the One Plan approach promoted by the IUCN/SSC, which aims to integrate actions carried out in the wild and under human care into a single, coherent strategy. These actions are strictly non-profit and regulated, with no commercial purpose. They are conducted in accordance with applicable national and international legal frameworks, in particular CITES regulations, and are entirely subordinate to the objectives of *in situ* conservation, applied scientific research and awareness raising.

For Parson's chameleon (*Calumma parsonii*), this network aims to support the research programme conducted in Madagascar and enables the development of complementary research that is difficult to carry out exclusively in the field, as well as strengthening scientific mediation capacity around an emblematic species.

For the three-horned chameleon (*Trioceros jacksonii*), this applied research platform is dedicated to the thermoregulation and physiological adaptations of mountain chameleons.

### Impact of *ex situ* activities (since 2023)

- 6 researchers involved
- 8 active *ex situ* partner structures in Europe
- 5 European countries involved in the network
- 2 taxa integrated
- 1 taxon directly linked to an identified *in situ* project



Workshop for children on the theme of the care centre's activities during Chameleon Day at MUZO (Switzerland) in April 2025 (Photo: Piouceau Photo)

## 5. Communication and partnerships

In 2025, the CCC consolidated its institutional positioning in parallel with the growth of its scientific and conservation activities by expanding its network of scientific, institutional and zoological partners in Europe, Africa and Madagascar.

New technical and financial partners in 2025: Morocco Herpetology - Ibn Zohr University Taroudant, La Perle aux Oiseaux, Pairi Daiza Foundation, Mulhouse Zoological and Botanical Park, IMPACT Madagascar, VOI Iaroka, Fauna Morocco, IUCN/SSC Chameleon Specialist Group, Naturevolution, Zoopark Zàjezd and SensorPush.



The partnership established with the **IUCN Chameleon Specialist Group** is a major recognition of the expertise developed by the association and strengthens its legitimacy within international reference bodies.

**Scientific communication and awareness-raising activities** have been continued in order to promote the results produced and enhance the transparency of the actions carried out, including: 27 blog posts, nearly 3,000 followers on social media, the launch of a YouTube channel on International Chameleon Day, two popular science articles, and two conferences and exhibitions aimed at the general public. At the same time, the association has been present at several leading scientific and professional events, contributing to its active integration into specialist networks.

#### Communications and partnership impact (2025)

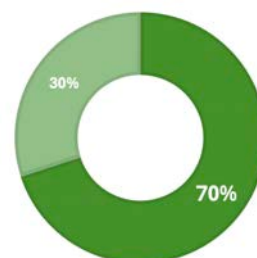
- 11 new institutional partners
- 1 new communication channel on YouTube
- 100,000 European visitors directly informed about our activities
- 3,000 people follow our social media accounts



Brokese supercilios (Photo: Samuel Bouyaud)

## 6. Financial summary 2025

| CHF (Swiss francs)                      | Revenue       | Expenses      |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Funds carried over from 2024            | 4,748         |               |
| Funds received in 2025                  | 52,603        |               |
| Scientific/field equipment and supplies |               | 9,066         |
| Accommodation, meals and transport      |               | 9,491         |
| Student/guide allowances and lab costs  |               | 8,351         |
| Administrative expenses                 |               | 1,321         |
| <b>Totals</b>                           | <b>57,351</b> | <b>28,229</b> |
| Available as at 31 December 2025        | 29,122        |               |



70% of total expenditure directly benefits local communities.

#### Direct financial impact (2025)

60% of local expenditure devoted to projects carried out in Vohimana, a long-standing partner of the CCC.  
65% of project expenditure dedicated to the Parson's chameleon programme, due to its priority status and the implementation of long-term scientific protocols.



Accommodation and meal expenses for CCC researchers paid directly to the leaders of the VOI Iaroka village association, Madagascar

## 7. Outlook for 2026

In 2026, the CCC will continue and expand its activities in order to strengthen the impact of its conservation programmes, further research on priority species and consolidate the training of the next generation of scientists.

The priorities identified include:

- launching a mission dedicated to the **Pinocchio** chameleon (*Calumma pinocchio*) in Vohimana;
- extending scientific monitoring of **Parson's chameleon** to the Iaroka forest, using a comparative approach between the two subspecies present in Vohimana and Iaroka respectively;
- continuation and structuring of activities in **Morocco** and in the **Iaroka** forest;
- continuing research on the **thermoregulation** of mountain chameleons;
- strengthening of zoological collaborations and diversification of funding strategies;
- opening of a CCC **representative office** in Madagascar.

The CCC is thus approaching 2026 with ambition, scientific rigour and a long-term commitment.



*Calumma pinocchio*, the Pinocchio Chameleon (Photo: Lucas Orsini)

All of the actions presented in this report are based on transparency, scientific rigour and continuous evaluation, in order to guarantee the relevance, credibility and sustainability of the CCC's commitments to its institutional and financial partners.

For the Caméléon Conservation Centre

**Sébastien Métrailler**  
Founding President

St-Gingolph (Switzerland), January 2026

Thank you to our technical and financial partners!

