

July 2026 — Project Update

Madagascar: Farankaraina Forest

Field Partner: Fandroakando NGO

Background: The Farankaraina Forest (2,770 ha) and other forests in NE Madagascar are experiencing pressures from increasing population, poverty, and slash-and-burn agricultural practices. Located on Antongil Bay—within proximity to the Makira Natural Park and Masoala National Park—Farankaraina extends inland from the ocean to an interior elevation of 410 m. The region is estimated to contain 50% of Madagascar’s biodiversity, while covering only 2% of its total surface area. It is home to the highest diversity of Madagascar’s emblematic lemur species and many threatened species. After Farankaraina Forest was established in 1961 it was under management of the Madagascar government. In July 2020, Fandroakando NGO became involved in order to improve forest management, supporting the renewal of forest management transfer agreements between the government and Local Village Associations (VOI).

In the first half of 2026, Fandroakando staff completed the restoration of 5 ha of degraded areas within Farankaraina Forest. They planted a total of 4,000 seedlings, including 1,900 of tapia (*Uapaca bojeri*)—a tree species endemic to Madagascar—and 1,200 of *Anthostema madagascariense*, a flowering plant native to eastern Madagascar. In addition, the VOI responsible for the eastern portion of Farankaraina Forest restored 1.5 ha of degraded land by planting 1,500 seedlings of tapia (*Uapaca bojeri*).

In terms of forest protection, Fandroakando continued its monthly joint forest patrols with the VOIs. Illegal logging was the most observed offense during patrols. No enforcement had been implemented by the local communities in a while (none took place in 2025), however three of the documented offenses this year are currently being addressed with the Dina, which is a traditional local charter or pact that governs behavior and social interactions.



FI.NA.MA VOI members - eastern region (credit Carlos R. García)

This shows the challenges and ongoing pressure that Farankaraina Forest experiences from the surrounding communities—there are 8 villages with an estimated total population of 20,000 people living around the Farankaraina Forest. But we are also seeing the positive impacts made by Fandroakando and the VOIs, as observed offences within the forest have decreased compared to this time last year.

In addition, during the reporting period, project staff recorded the presence of three lemur species in the forest, including the Vulnerable white-fronted lemur (*Eulemur albifrons*), the Vulnerable western lesser bamboo lemur (*Hapalemur occidentalis*), and the Critically Endangered red ruffed lemur (*Varecia rubra*). This is a very positive sign in a region where there's still ongoing hunting pressure (poaching) of red-ruffed lemurs, driven by the demand of red-ruffed lemur meat (personal communication with Josia Razafindramanana, Founder of IMPACT Madagascar, on November 18, 2025).



White-fronted brown lemur (credit Fandroakando NGO)

We also see that the awareness campaigns (or 'Sensibilisation' in French) and the joint conservation efforts by Fandroakando and the local VOIs are succeeding in increasing involvement of local villagers in forest maintenance and restoration campaigns and awareness of the fauna (i.e., ecological / arboreal communities of several key indicator groups) found in the Farankaraina Forest.

Overall, Fandroakando's conservation and community work is having a positive impact for the locals in the region. Biome is proud to support this project in a challenging, but important region for global conservation.

with my best wishes,

Carlos R. García

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Fandroakando NGO team (credit Carlos R. García)