GUARDIANS OF XOCOYOLO: SAVING SPECIES THROUGH A RECYCLING PROGRAM

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Abstract

In 2008, the conservation program ‘Guardians of the Forest’ was developed in the northern mountainous region of Puebla state, with the rural and indigenous community of Xocoyolo that shares their habitat with an endemic toad, Incilius cristatus. After years of hard work, Africam Safari developed a recycling program for inorganic material that involves all members of the community. This recycling program comes from the need to create a clean environment for the endemic toad, Incilius cristatus, and other animals. The program is led by young people from the community that identify themselves as ‘Guardians of Xocoyolo’. The program’s main objectives are to create an environmental group, implement a collection center and inorganic material recycling program with the community, and to generate income for the environmental group through the sale of the recycled material. Convincing the community required fun games, talks and activities related to environmental care and that is where we saw things begin to change. After selling the recycled material for the first time, the attitude of the group and the community changed for the better. The first sale totalled 186 kg – made up of 140 kg of PET, 20 kg of paper and 26 kg of cardboard. The program is creating not just a cleaner space for nature but creating a new generation of leaders that care about environment and their community.