

Global Astronomy Survey: Madagascar

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SPoC Approved : Yes

1. Professional (Research) Astronomy:

(i) Number of universities offering Astronomy (and their names)

2 universities

- University of Antananarivo à Ankatso
- Ecole Normale Supérieure

(ii) Number of universities offering Physics (and their names)

8 universities

- University of Ankatso
- University of Toamasina
- University of Fianarantsoa
- University of Antsiranana
- University of Mahajanga
- University of Tulear
- Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Antananarivo
- Ecole Normale Supérieure de Fianarantsoa

(iii) Number of academics who have been trained in Astronomy (ideally with their names and levels of qualification)

In the University of Antananarivo alone we have more than 25 Physics teachers at PhD level. All of them received some training in Astronomy

At the Ecole Normale Supérieure we have 5 US trained PhD s in Physics, they all received some training in Astronomy

(iv) Number of astronomical facilities (observatories, telescopes, etc)

In Ankatso, we have an observatory somewhat old but still operational. It is part of the university.

At the observatory of Ankadiefajoro which is private and owned by the Malagasy Association for the Promotion of Science, we have :

MEADE LX200 (12")

MEADE Dobson LightBridge Deluxe (12")

MEADE ETX90

SKY WATCHER 90mm

SOLARSCOPE SUNSPOTTER

and as much detail about each as possible (websites/contact details)

The website will be ready very soon

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Professional Astronomy? Please include any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

I think it should be rated "Phase 3" or "Phase 2" or should I say somewhere in between as every teacher would like to engage in the field but the facilities are rather scarce.

2. Public Understanding of Astronomy:

(i) What governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities)

The government has not done anything so far, however the Minister is very enthused about what is being done regarding the IYA2009

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in)

The Malagasy Association for the Promotion of Science has been working since the early 90's. Star parties as well as conferences on the subject of Astronomy for associations such as Lion's club, Rotary clubs, schools and general public are rather routine

(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the media (TV, radio, newspapers). Is it very prominent? Are there specific programmes on astronomy? Is the media generally willing to publish news on astronomy?

We do not have any problem on that. As a matter of fact, we already started a weekly 10 minutes science programme on the MBS (Malagasy Broadcasting System). The following subjects were already treated:

- What is Astronomy

- The solar system
- The solar and lunar eclipses
- The milky way
- The southern hemisphere constellations

- Star formation

Unfortunately, the MBS has recently been destroyed after the political unrest that took place in the country and we stopped the programme.

The media is eager to publish anything on Astronomy anytime.

(iv) Comment on the presence of astronomy/science in the general culture of the people. Are there any specific challenges or setbacks? Is astronomy a welcome subject of conversation?

We have a long way to go. The Malagasy educational system leaves a lot to be desired but people are very eager to learn which is a good thing

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Public Understanding of Astronomy? Please include any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

Phase 3 should be it
I think we have very limited facilities

3. Astronomy in Schools:

(i) What governmental astronomy/science education and outreach programmes for schools take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities)

The Malagasy public schools do not have anything. The private schools and especially English and French speaking have some programmes but still very limited. We have been asked to give conferences and to organize star parties

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science education and outreach programmes for schools take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in)

Again, only the MAPS is doing something

(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the school curriculum. Is it part of the school curriculum? Is it very prominent? What age groups?

Astronomy is not part of the curriculum in public schools

(iv) Comment on the status of astronomy/science in schools. Are there any specific challenges or setbacks? Sufficient number of students studying maths and science? General interest in maths/science/astronomy in schools?

It is just a lot of work to be done. The interest is definitely there but the system is bad

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Astronomy in Schools? Please include any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

For the public schools, it is definitely phase 4