



# ANIMALS MATTER TO AFRICA

(Project launched 4 October 2014)

## PROJECT

**Animals Matter to Africa!** A long-term project designed to build political support and awareness for animal welfare across Africa; making this a priority issue which African Governments can no longer ignore.

African countries were encouraged to stage the first ever event for all species of animals on World Animal Day, 4 October 2014, as a graphic demonstration of the extent to which animals matter to Africa. It is now proposed to continue and develop this event annually.

*The clarion call of World Animal Protection's Universal Declaration of Animal Welfare – "Animals Matter!" – was, and will increasingly be, used as the unifying slogan and sentiment on the lips of every animal lover in Africa.*

The project, supported by targeted lobbying for national and international objectives, was initiated in Africa and designed to improve the awareness, policy and practice of animal welfare across the continent.

Participants, as a united front, were asked to champion the Pan African Animal Welfare Alliance (PAAWA)'s cause to highlight the plight of Africa's animals and to urge authorities to endorse the UDAW, introduce strategies to improve animal welfare, and to implement the World Organisation for Animal Health's international Animal Welfare standards.



## LEAD ORGANISATION

United Front 4 Animals (UFA). Based in Cape Town, one of the main aims of UFA is policy advocacy, as a united force, about the broad spectrum of mutual and underlying concerns which need to be addressed to reform animal welfare legislation and practice for all species.

Other than the Animals Matter event, in the past year alone UFA was involved in a number of activities:

- Organised the South African segment of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust's International March for Elephants. Also Organised an "adoption" drive and facilitated significant commitment to the DSWT Orphan's Project <https://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/asp/orphans.asp>
- Helped organise the worldwide Global March for Lions (ultimately covering 62 cities across the world) and organised and led the Cape Town leg of the march.
- Successfully prevented the relocation of elephants to a wine farm in the Western Cape (meant to "earn their keep as tourist attractions" which involved untenable captivity and suffering), and had the same wine estate cancel their "Pressed by Elephants" trademark and stopped the pressing of grapes by elephants.
- Demonstrated outside the Chinese Consulate for nine weeks until the Consulate accepted their memorandum to demand the closure of ivory carving factories in mainland China.
- Organised a major outreach in Valhalla Park informal settlement after a devastating fire left thousands of shack dwellers and their companion animals homeless.
- Protested outside Parliament and handed over a memorandum to government regarding the mass starvation and death of farm animals on a politician's farm. This resulted in a mutually beneficial meeting with Government Officials to discuss (their) future plans and (our) urgent call for reform.
- In addition UFA was one of the lead groups who objected and protested, together with a number of other organisations, against proposed legislation to legalise dog racing in South Africa, with resounding success – the proposed legislation was scrapped.



## PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

World Animal Protection, World Animal Net, A Well-Fed World, Pan African Animal Welfare Alliance and TEARS partnered with UFA to execute the AMTA project successfully. Other partners and sponsors are listed under the heading "Sponsors and Funding".

The following countries and towns, irrespective of time and other constraints, joined forces with the AMTA team: Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. In South Africa, Cape Town, Ladybrand, and Middelburg (Mpumalanga) made it known that Animals Matter to Africa ... and to them!

Numerous other countries, cities, towns and villages have already committed and are starting to plan their 2015 campaign. They are excited about the prospect of teamwork, and a shared vision and project.

Marchers from Ladybrand in the Free State (SA), pictured overleaf, brought the small town to a standstill!



## MAJOR OBJECTIVES

**Political awareness.** African governments have to recognise the need for urgent and serious reform and for Animal Welfare to be put firmly on the political agenda. For too long, Africa's development has ignored the welfare and protection of the continent's animals – leaving Africa's animals in crisis.

**Unity.** Animal Welfare/Protection organisations need to unite. Mass and united action is an indispensable way to challenge governments and raise the voice of the silent majority. It plays a crucial role in raising awareness, encouraging citizens to force their governments to listen. Plus it mobilises, motivates and encourages animal protection organisations that often work alone and feel the burden and seeming hopelessness of the scale of the task.

**Social change and reformed legislation.** Animal Welfare is an important matter of moral and social significance. African countries can no longer develop in a sustainable manner without giving full consideration to the situation and the welfare needs of the fellow sentient animals that share our territory. Animal Welfare must be included in every country's Constitution, legislation reformed and effectively enforced. Public awareness and media coverage are vital parts of the social change process.

**Support for international reforms.** AMTA also aims to build support for international reforms, including OIE regional strategies and international standards, and at UN level – African Governments endorsing UDAW, and building support for UN recognition for WAD.

## SUMMARY PROJECT REPORT

**The AMTA Parade** in Cape Town was colourful and marchers loudly proclaimed that "Animals Matter". Led by African drummers, and three giant puppets (the Lion, Springbok Prince and the Horned Prince), marchers followed decked out in Animals Matter T-shirts, animal mascot heads, ventriloquist puppets, animal costumes and masks, carrying a wide variety of messages on placards and banners for all to see. Much awareness was raised, hundreds of pictures taken by bystanders, and educational AMTA flyers<sup>1</sup> distributed along the way. Our message was heard far and wide.

**At Parliament** we handed over our memorandum<sup>2</sup> to Mr Fundisile Mketeni : Deputy Director-General Biodiversity and Conservation: Environmental Affairs and Dr Tembile Songabe: Director Veterinary Public Health, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Mr Mketeni addressed the crowd at Parliament and undertook to hand it to Minister Molewa, and Dr Songabe shared some of the Government's future plans with the audience at the festival.

**The AMTA Festival** followed. Held at Green Point Park, it was well attended - also by many Capetonians who use the Park, passers-by, and those reached via promotional material, radio interviews and an appearance on national television. Numerous food vendors and Animal Welfare organisations set up stalls to raise awareness and funds, and Coca Cola made sure all could quench their thirst on a hot October day.

Entertainment was interspersed with educational slots by way of presentations and poetry. It was a resounding success, focused/poignant awareness raised, and fun was had by all.

<sup>1</sup> AMTA flyer enclosed

<sup>2</sup> Memoranda enclosed



## MAJOR CHALLENGES / LEARNING POINTS

**Corporates and the media** do not seem to realise the importance of Animal Welfare vis-à-vis human development and a peaceful society, and appear to be apathetic and disinterested in general. AMTA organisers need to communicate more effectively regarding the need that exists, the importance of the initiative, and establish partnerships and relationships.

**Sponsorship.** Adequate funding is critical (lacking this year) to implement and achieve AMTA's stated objectives and to ensure, not only greater public awareness, but also optimal participation and exposure to facilitate the animal welfare reform we seek. One of AMTA's major aims is also to educate and make ambassadors of animal loving leaders in disadvantaged communities. Funding is necessary to include as many individuals as possible from townships and informal settlements in the AMTA project. With a sense of pride, they will in turn start taking up the responsibility to educate and watch out for abuse/neglect in their communities. No funding was available to start implementing this very important goal. The latter goes hand in hand with corporate partnerships, particularly those already involved in assisting underprivileged communities and AMTA organisers will be more precise about the need for funding and whom to approach in this regard.

**Fundraising.** Because the AMTA organisers are all volunteers (gainfully employed elsewhere), large scale fundraising for a very small team was not possible although some valiant attempts were made, reflected under the heading "Sponsorship and Fundraising". The crowd-funding initiative put in place by organisers was launched too late to ensure cash flow, time consuming, and probably not the desired platform, or not promoted correctly, and will be reviewed as a viable option. Organisers, going forward, will do their utmost to arrange more effective fundraising projects/events.

**Celebrity involvement** is critical to optimise and accelerate public awareness and was non-existent this year. Organisers are committed to identify suitable celebrities as AMTA Ambassadors and if necessary and the budget allows, pay for at least their travelling expenses and accommodation.

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

**Precedent.** The flagship event in Cape Town set a goal oriented and credible precedent for the AMTA project – visibly, succinctly, and professionally captured in a three minute video produced by KisamboMedia – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYHK-6mi9ZM>

**Political awareness.** An excellent starting point for raising the political awareness of animal welfare so vitally needed across the continent.

**Unity.** The pioneer AMTA project, in a short space of time, garnered remarkable support from the Animal Welfare/Protection community. Apart from our main sponsors –World Animal Protection (Africa), A Well-Fed World, and World Animal Net, the Pan African Animal Welfare Alliance (the unifying pan-African force), and the organisers, United Front 4 Animals, and the Emma Animal Rescue Society (TEARS) – the following organisations heeded the organisers' call to unite: Cape of Good Hope SPCA, PDSA SA, South African Guide Dogs Association for the Blind, LEAPS, DARG, Beauty Without Cruelty SA, 269 Life, African Vegan Outreach, Vegilicious, Sea Shepherd SA, Baboon Matters, Deep South Animal Educare, Valhalla Park Animal Welfare, Lucky Lucy Foundation, and Greenpeace. The NSPCA also invited their branches to take part in the initiative.

**Food Vendors** (themselves passionate and compassionate animal lovers) who participated in the celebration of all creatures great and small, some coming from as far a field as Swellendam and Paarl: Alive Cafe, Moonshadow, Pasticcio Vegan Pies, Plant Cafe, Tatamoo Vegan Cheese, Vivo Pizza and V-Life.

A very important show of unity and achievement for the newly fledged African project.

**Awareness – Public & Political and Media** – the “flagship crew” having set sail in uncharted waters achieved a great deal in this regard, despite the lack of celebrity involvement, adequate sponsorship and the perceived apathy mentioned above. Fully illustrated under the heading “Project Summary”, and add to that the popularity of YouTube and the video produced (another in progress) as well as exposure on Social Media. AMTA could not have asked for more this year.

**Social change and reformed legislation.** South Africa has now publically voiced its commitment to the introduction of revised AW policies and legislation. UFA and PAAWA are now well placed as consultation partners in this process. An annual event will provide a high-profile focus to keep the process on track, and highlight any problems! We will highlight and share our progress with other African countries, to add to their advocacy efforts.

**Support for international reforms.** AMTA has now started to build pressure for African commitments to international reforms. We will continue to advocate for this throughout the year, and on each WAD. Another achievement was spreading this higher-level policy awareness amongst all animal protection organisations involved (not only in South Africa, but across the continent).



## SPONSORS / FUNDING

The last-minute and generous **grant from World Animal Protection Africa** unquestionably saved the day.

**Other cash donations:** World Animal Net, A Well-Fed World – feeding families / saving animals, and United Front 4 Animals (the latter cleaned out their existing bank balance to ensure cash flow for AMTA because of unwavering confidence in the project).

**Fundraising:** Organisers set up on-line crowd-funding and UFA set up and manned a market stall leading up to the event.

**Fully sponsored services & equipment and other donations.** Had it not been for the generosity and compassion of these organisations and individuals, AMTA would not have achieved as much as it did. The following donated services, equipment, and talent which contributed enormously to the successful launch of the project: Sheila Wilson (graphic designer – banners, placards and flyers), Dean Jooste (graphic designer AMTA logo), Resq Medix (medical team and vehicle), Nikki Swan (award winning artist donated art sold by UFA for funds on the day), KisamboMedia – professional film makers (produced our video), Carmen Lorraine Photography (professional photographer), Planet Woof Pet Store (raffle hamper worth well over R1 000), David Muller provided sound equipment for the festival segment of the event and his son Robin was the “sound engineer”, Theatreland (use of animal mascot heads), Conrad Koch (use of ventriloquist puppets). The following local artists performed at the festival pro bono, the Merry Scholar (MC and Poetry), Pierre and the Earheart (Djembe) Drummers (also led the parade) and Ushka, part of the group, danced, Stacey Marinus from DANCE School of Dance performed an acrobatic dance, a local group of Zumba Dancers and local singers, Liezel van Heerden and Annie.

**Discounted services and equipment.** AVL Africa (sound equipment for the parade and the hand-over ceremony at Parliament), Fox Base Alpha Logistics (generator for stage sound), Puppetry South Africa (formerly UNIMA), themselves a charitable organisation, discounted the appearance of the giant puppets.

## CONCLUSION

The AMTA project was launched successfully, because of unprecedented commitment and hard work by dedicated volunteers, sponsors and supporters, to whom animals truly matter!

## FUTURE PLANS

With more and continued support, the AMTA project leaders, will grow their ranks, unify Animal Welfare/Protection Organisations, and African countries, until the continent reverberates – every World Animal Day - with World Animal Protection’s clarion call of “Animals Matter”! And until every African Government will have no option but to heed our petition to reform animal welfare legislation which will stop the cruelty, abuse, exploitation and suffering of all animals, and protect our wildlife – our heritage – from the killing and rampant destruction for “fun”, greed and to fund terrorist activities.

## TRIBUTE

Report submitted with a tribute of gratitude to all sponsors, contributors, supporters and animal lovers who joined forces with the AMTA team, and above all to TEARS who helped UFA, every step of the way, to launch the Animals Matter to Africa project successfully.

**Nikki Elliott**

Founder/Director: United Front 4 Animals

World Animal Day Ambassador: SA

<http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk/ambassadors/south-africa-2/>

ANIMALS MATTER TO AFRICA TEAM LEADER

