

## Charity

## Around Seychelles in 18 Bays

## All-female crew sail for charity

by A. Selwano

In order to celebrate "International Ocean Day" a group of Seychellois women known as "Fammi Seselwa" along with Seychelles Women and Sports Association (SWASA) members are planning to sail across 18 bays of Seychelles to raise money for the "Liam Rainbow Foundation".

In the process their aim is to increase awareness of the diversity of the oceans, whilst highlighting the extraordinary maritime abilities of Seychelles women.

Leaving Marine Charter very early in the morning, the all-female team will go to Anse Major, Silhouette, Praslin, Curieuse, Grand Socar, Felicite, Cocos Island, La Digue, and return to Marine Charter.

This route will pass through 18 bays and showcase the splendour of Seychelles' islands and marine environment for both local and foreign audiences.

In this landmark journey of the sea, women will be aired live together with videos depicting marine conservation, fisheries, Liam's rainbow foundation, and profiles of the participants.

TODAY brings you three more of the female participants.

## Wilma Accouche



- Wilma Accouche

A conservationist with an unwavering commitment to protecting biodiversity in Seychelles, Ms Accouche has worked for many years in the non-profit sector leading projects ranging from fisheries science to island habitat restoration as well as providing technical support to environmental projects.

She also spearheaded work on

critical species and habitats in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Aldabra Atoll and Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve when at the Seychelles Islands Foundation.

Experienced and knowledgeable about the Seychelles biodiversity due to working in various islands in the country, Ms Accouche is the General Manager of Green Islands Foundation - an organisation committed to promoting sustainable practices in local industries.

"I have worked as a conservation practitioner for two decades and have witnessed changes in the state of the marine environment around the islands. There are also changes in the Seychelles' relationship with the natural environment around them.

"I hope through my participation in the '18 Bays Project', I can draw attention to the need to conserve the oceans through a concerted approach. The ocean is at the center of our way of life, therefore is the responsibility of each and every one of us.

"I am equally happy to support Liam Rainbow Foundation which support sick children and their families along with fellow women colleagues through this project".

## Dilys Pongemann

A young Seychellois scientist at the Icare Our Sea Foundation - D'Arenas Research Centre on D'Arenas Island and the St Joseph Atoll.



- Dilys Pongemann

"I am taking part in this event as an advocate for the planet. Since it will be world oceans day, it will be a day to raise awareness about the marvels of our beautiful environment, the impacts of our actions on the ocean, sustainable management and most importantly how it is crucial for our survival and all life on earth.

Secondly, this charity event is for children in need. Children are affected by all of the sustainable development goals and the existence of healthy children is important for the sustainable future of our planet. Supporting children in need means we are supporting our future.

I consider myself a generalist scientist and have worked in the terrestrial and marine fields. I have an immense passion for the natural world and understand its importance for our survival.

Additionally, I am also a filmmaker because I like sharing my love of the environment with the non-scientific community aiming to inspire more people to love nature and opt for a sustainable lifestyle so that we can all safeguard our natural world and enjoy the resources it provides."

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## Nella Victor

A well-rounded fisherwoman who also has experience working in conservation.

I started as a Fisherwoman and now I am the owner of a small business, Aquaman.

After completing my studies I joined SIF as a field ranger where I worked at the Vallée de Mai for few months before moving to everyone's dream place, the Aldabra Atoll.

I worked on Aldabra Atoll for 6 months as a Ranger, helping with monitoring and data collection for marine and terrestrial fieldwork. My work also entailed running after wild goats, frigate bird census, and diving in the main channel.

Working on Aldabra was an experience of a lifetime that has marked me and has made me more independent in many ways. After completing my contract there I moved back to Praslin where I joined the Nature Sey-

chelles-Cousin Island Nature Reserve.

After years of being a 'migratory bird' I decided to move back to Mahe and where I joined MCS8, another partner in conservation. I worked there as a research officer whereby we monitor mostly nesting sea turtles and whale sharks. Conserving our flora and fauna has always been a passion and pleasure for me.

After years of working in the conservation field I decided to explore other parts of the maritime world and I became a fisherwoman.

As a woman in the maritime field, I am very proud of the role I play and the contributions I am making towards the fishery sector. I have always dreamt for such opportunity to contribute towards a good cause and to raise awareness on the importance of the role that we women play in everyday life.

Me sailing 'Around Seychelles in 18 Bays' will empower other women to get out of their comfort zone and stand up for themselves as I feel it is a life-changing experience that I am looking forward to."



- Map of Mahe



- Map of Praslin



- Map of La Digue