



Press Release

Air France KLM Martinair Cargo partners with the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco to transfer 46 African spurred tortoises to Senegal, as part of a programme to boost local populations

Roissy, 13 December 2022, Air France KLM Martinair Cargo (AFKLMP Cargo) worked with the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco to transport 46 juvenile tortoises to Le Village des Tortues in Noflaye, Senegal, as part of a population reinforcement project. This transfer is one phase of a three-year programme.

Since 2012, the Oceanographic Museum of Monaco has been home to several African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*), the third largest land tortoise in the world. These herbivorous reptiles, from a breeding centre in Mali, were entrusted to Robert Calcagno, director-general of the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco, in order to educate visitors about the need to protect this endangered species.

“Protecting animal species, both on land and at sea, and making them known to the general public is a major challenge for the future. By housing these spurred tortoises, now an endangered species, we have allowed them to reproduce while raising awareness among visitors of the need to protect them. The logical outcome was to work to boost the local wild populations,” explains Robert Calcagno.

The transportation of the tortoises to Senegal was enabled by the specialist services of AFKLMP Cargo, which facilitated the tortoises' journey from Monaco to Dakar via its hub at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport. The programme includes management of the tortoises in quarantine within the Centre for the Protection of Turtles in Senegal - Village des Tortues, their introduction into the Koyli Alpha Nature Reserve in the northwest of the country, and their monitoring for a two-year period.

A “QUARANTINE” PHASE

Six crates were specially designed to transport the 46 juvenile tortoises from the AFKLMP Cargo hub in Paris to Dakar on 12 December.

Mathieu Fleisch, Vice President Product & Verticals for AFKLMP Cargo, explains, *“Air France KLM Martinair Cargo is very sensitive to the protection of the environment and the preservation of endangered species. We were therefore delighted to join the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco in transferring the 46 African spurred tortoises to Senegal. We were proud to make our extensive network and our recognised expertise in the transport of live animals available for this operation.”*

The tortoises have been placed in an observation enclosure for six months, located in Le Village des Tortues in Noflaye, a conservation centre housed in the heart of a special botanical reserve.

At the end of the quarantine phase, the juveniles will be transferred to a fenced-off part of the reserve for one year so that they can acclimatise to living conditions in the wild. They will then be released in the reserve managed by the association, in accordance with the recommendations and directives of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) within the framework of wildlife reintroduction operations.

The tortoises will be monitored regularly by trained staff, who will analyse their growth and adaptation to the reserve. During this monitoring period, several education and awareness-raising campaigns will also be undertaken to involve local communities in the conservation project. “As with all our projects, beyond the biological objectives, we seek to raise public awareness of the causes we defend. Here, children from local communities will be trained and involved in the project,” comments Olivier Brunel, project manager for the operation.

Thanks to AFKLMP Cargo's expertise in the transportation of live animals, the endangered tortoises will hopefully thrive in their new environment.

About The Oceanographic Museum of Monaco

The Oceanographic Museum with the iconic Rock of Monaco as a backdrop, educates more than 650,000 visitors a year. Beyond its remarkable architecture, it is distinguished by its world-famous aquarium, its exhibitions and its alliance between art and science. A place of culture and exchange, with the protection of the ocean as the binding element, the Oceanographic Museum organises and hosts conferences of international stature.

About Air France KLM Martinair Cargo

The Air France-KLM Group is a global airline group with a strong European base. Its main areas of business are passenger transport, cargo transport and aeronautical maintenance.

Air France KLM Martinair Cargo is the Air France-KLM Group's dedicated air cargo business. Air France Cargo and KLM Cargo are members of SkyTeam Cargo offering even larger network coverage. Please click [here](#) to go to our press releases online or visit www.afklcargo.com for more information about Air France KLM Martinair Cargo.

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