

Report of my Voluntary Service in Sicily / Italy

September to December 2011

During my almost 3 months voluntary service with the Manfred-Hermsen-Stiftung and performed by Verdi Giacche in the town of Bronte (Sicily), I have done various activities related to conservation of natural heritage.

The main activity in which I have been involved was the creation and design of the mapping for a Biosphere Reserve in the Northeast of Sicily.

To do this, I had the luck to make several trips around the island to cities like Catania and Messina and attend a two day convention about Biosphere Reserves in Syracuse. I could also visit the various parks with the intention to collect data and know the terrain to include in the future Reserve of the Biosphere: depth walks through the parks of Etna, Nebrodi, Madonie and Alcantara, each with their different features (rocks, vegetation...) were a great experience for those who love nature and we believe that its preservation is essential.

I was fortunate to share these natural parks travels with Professor Michael Succow, an eminence in the field of environment, who transmit his interest and passion for nature.

Specifically, I had the opportunity to work with horses, cleaning stables, place land fencing and horseback riding with disabled people... this activity was highly rewarding.

Leaving aside the volunteer work, I had the chance to enjoy and discover an island like Sicily: meeting the locals, meeting the other volunteers, food, language... in short, to be involved in a new culture and way of life, why not say, more quiet and without bustle.

In short, is a 100% experience recommended for those who want to do voluntary work and are hesitant to do it.

Raúl Ruiz

Santander, 27.1.2012