

# 1 / 2024

# BULLETIN

## EDITORIAL

### Dear reader

*The year 2023 was characterised by unforeseen challenges, which led to an early and massive setback in the production and sale of our cookers.*

*Despite all the obstacles, ADES achieved new record results, even if the ambitious growth target for cooker sales could not quite be reached. This performance under difficult conditions was achieved thanks to the flexibility and commitment of our employees in Madagascar. In order to safeguard our production in the event of unforeseen future events, ADES is creating a new interface between Switzerland and Madagascar in the form of the Technical Director. We are pleased to introduce him in this bulletin.*

*In order to keep its finger on the pulse of developments and needs in Madagascar in the future, ADES is focussing on innovation in the further development of existing products, the development of new products for the existing market and research and development for the future. You can also find out more about this on the following pages. Thank you very much for your interest, your trust and your support.*



Yours  
Luc Estapé

## SUSTAINABLY EFFECTIVE FOR MADAGASKAR

### ANNUAL TARGET MISSED DESPITE RECORD SALES

**The year 2023 presented our production and sales staff with various unplanned challenges. In the first six months in particular, only 37 percent of the planned cookers could be produced. Nevertheless, 97 percent of the ambitious growth target of 100,000 cookers was achieved by the end of the year. Despite record production and sales in the final months of the year, the sales target was missed.**

The first half of the year presented the following challenges for production: Cyclones led to interruptions in our workshops, and at the end of 2022 a fire at our production partner Bionerr led to a month-long interruption in production. By the middle of the year, production had only reached 37 percent of the annual target and was far behind the targeted growth. Quick and unbureaucratic help to Bionerr and various measures, such as putting additional production lines into operation in our workshops, made it possible, despite all the difficulties, to achieve 97 percent of the goal of 100,000 stoves by the end of the year. ADES was able to achieve the strongest production months in its history. The addition of the new metal workshop last year and research and development projects with partners,



Cook in a street kitchen in Ampanihy.

such as Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Power-Blox, marked successful progress in promoting clean cooking technologies.

With almost 88,000 stoves sold, ADES achieved a new record, but still fell well short of the ambitious growth target. One of the reasons for this is empty warehouses. Due to the production bottlenecks in the first half of the year various sales measures were lost, major customers as well as resellers could only receive supply with a considerable delay, in some cases. In addition, we had to temporarily withdraw a significant number of our sales staff in order to resolve data problems for our CO<sub>2</sub> certification over a long period of weeks. Towards the end of the year, our sales team achieved new sales records of over 10,000 stoves per month. This confirms that the annual target was set realistically and can be achieved in the future when less negative conditions are given. To ensure production in the long term and further improve it, ADES has decided to create the new position of Technical Director.

## NEW TECHNICAL MANAGER

The work in Madagascar and the big growth in recent years presents ADES with a variety of challenges. External and internal factors must continually be evaluated, machine failures must be considered and maintenance windows planned. Solutions need to be developed in advance due to lack of infrastructure, missing spare parts or restrictions arising from weather conditions. For these and many other tasks, ADES has created the new position of technical director.



Azagen Mootien is a triple citizen, Swiss-French-Mauritian, and lives in Alsace, France. Starting in March 2024, the engineer will act as an interface between ADES in Switzerland and Madagascar. Azagen will ensure the production and high quality of our cookers in the long run. He will work in Madagascar as well as from our office in Mettmenstetten. We look forward to this collaboration.

## SUCCESSFUL EMPOWERMENT

ADES does not only create jobs in its workshops and centers, by the end of the year, it also enabled 242 independent resellers to earn (additional) income. They are responsible for two thirds of our sales and are closely supported by ADES. They do not only learn sales techniques, but also how to secure a regular income in the long term. Among other things, they learn how to create their own business plans. 96 percent of our retail sellers received training last year. In order to strengthen the relationship with our resellers, mutual expectations and requirements were discussed during the training. Through this, ADES hopes for better sales and less abuse. With the recruitment of seven new resellers, ADES was able to achieve its annual goal.



Bedada, ADES reseller in Ampanihy, receives a delivery of energy-saving cookers.

## INNOVATION AT ADES

Development is important for every organization. Standing still means losing touch. Also ADES is constantly on the move and trying to prepare itself for future challenges. The topic of innovation is central because it determines whether ADES can offer products that are in tune with the needs of the population. At ADES, innovation takes place at three levels:

### Product development (existing markets, existing products)

Our energy-saving cookers form the backbone of our production and our measures. There will be a need for our simple but functional, energy-efficient cookers in Madagascar for at least the next ten to twenty years. That is why the further development and optimisation of our existing solar and energy-saving cookers is also at the heart of our innovation measures. In addition to improvements to the design or production of our cookers, ADES is currently developing a new version of our energy-saving cookers, for example, which are as efficient with wood and coal.

ADES generally finances this research and development itself through income from the sale of CO<sub>2</sub> certificates.

### Pre-development (existing markets, new products)

In addition to optimising existing cookers, ADES is also looking at ways to expand the existing product range. A current



The optimised clay cooker works with wood and coal.

example of this is the introduction of the energy-saving metal cooker, 3,000 of which were imported to Madagascar for a market study in the first half of 2024. The cooker offers an urban target group a number of advantages over our clay cookers: it is significantly lighter, looks more modern, heats up faster and is therefore more efficient than our clay cooker. At the same time, it has a shorter lifespan and would be offered in the top price segment of ADES cookers. The new cookers are not intended to compete with our clay cookers, but to help meet the demand, which far exceeds our production capacities. If the market study is positive, ADES intends to set up the infrastructure in the near future in order to assemble the products in a new ADES workshop. In this way, ADES will create as much added value and as many jobs as possible in Madagascar.



Metal cooker „LeMadio“ (the clean one).

## Future innovation

ADES' research and development activities have reached new milestones. In addition to the development of an energy-saving cooker that works equally well with wood and coal, we are pursuing two different approaches with various partners.

Prototypes of solar-powered electric cookers, which ADES is developing together with the company Power-Blox, are currently in Madagascar, where they are being tested in daily use. A lot of energy is needed in a short time for a cooking process, as opposed to a radio that requires little energy over a longer period of time. This poses a completely different challenge to the electrification of light or electricity.

For example, a radio requires little energy over a longer period of time. The current test results will provide important information for ongoing further development.



eCooker with new housing concept.

Together with Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, ADES is developing a thermal energy storage system that can be used to store solar energy without an electric battery. ADES has created and further developed prototypes for a thermal energy storage system for solar energy as part of three bachelor theses by mechanical and environmental engineers. This allows problems with electrical solutions, such as the cost and availability of electronic parts or their disposal, to be elegantly solved. As part of a fourth bachelor's thesis, the existing model is to be optimised and functional models are to be built for tests in Madagascar. One focus here is that the materials used are as cheap and non-toxic as possible, and that the energy storage system is planned as simply as possible so that production in Madagascar is realistic in the medium term if customer response is positive.



The performance of our prototype thermal energy storage system is measured.

## FREE WEBINAR

We receive support for our work to protect the environment and reduce poverty in Madagascar in a variety of ways. One way is to remember us in a will. Together with the „Your Adieu“ platform, ADES offers



interested persons free webinars:

Specialists explain what is important when it comes to estate planning and writing a will - and how you can easily create a will online that is valid in Switzerland.

## RECOVERY

At the end of the 2023 planting season, we had slightly exceeded the annual target of 263,000 trees planted. Since the final figures on replanting are still outstanding at the time of writing this report, the definitive figures are not yet known. ADES has established a network of reforestation projects with seven partner organisations and its own projects together with village communities.

ADES reforestation projects not only protect the remaining natural forest. Disadvantaged sections of the population are

## ADES BLOG

### WHY TECHNOLOGY WILL NOT SAVE US

„If a society cannot cope with the creation of its resources, the really interesting questions concern the society, not the resource. What structural, political, ideological or economic factors in society have prevented an appropriate response?“



This quote from Joseph A. Tainter, an American anthropologist and historian, raises the question of why, despite significant reports and annual climate analyses, people do not take proactive, preventive and, above all, binding measures to move us forward in climate policy.

Lou Messerli is a Master's student in Sustainable Societies and Social Change at the University of Geneva. She is completing a ten-month internship at ADES, focusing on the topics of impact measurement and skills transfer. In the ADES blog, she writes about why technology will not save us from climate change.

You can also find further background articles on ADES topics in our blog.

given a chance to improve their living conditions and rural exodus is reduced. Food security can be increased, especially in the arid and hunger-stricken South. Our partner organisations would like to see a further expansion of the joint reforestation projects and new village communities would like to join the successful projects.

This is a good starting point for ADES, as strong growth of over 50 percent to 356,000 trees are planned for 2024. The number of trees are expected to increase to 430,000 by 2026. The measures to achieve this include agroforestry, the planting of timber, erosion control, the creation of arboretums and the protection of natural forests.

However, our employees are also involved in other reforestation projects. In the Haute Matsiatra region, ADES employees took part in the measures in January as part of the state reforestation initiative „Ho rakotr'ala i Madagasikara“ (meaning „Madagascar will be reforested“). In the period 2024-2025 alone, a total of 5100 hectares will be reforested.



South of Fianarantsoa, ADES employees are helping with a government reforestation programme.

## AGENDA

Sat, 23. March: Solarkocher-Workshop  
Sommer Holzwerkstatt, Rifferswil

Sat, 13. April: Extraordinary General Assembly  
Volkshaus Zurich

Thurs, 16. May: Ökomarkt, St.Gall  
[www.oekomarkt.ch](http://www.oekomarkt.ch)

Sat, 31. August: O Sole Bio, Zug  
[www.osolebio.ch](http://www.osolebio.ch)

*„My name is Ousmane Jean Styvino. I work as a commercial employee in Antalaha. I'm glad that I can work at ADES because I like the work related to environmental protection.*



*Since joining ADES, I have experienced many wonderful and unforgettable events. ADES gives me courage and puts a smile on my face, because working for ADES is an important career step for me!“*

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