

# THE AMAZON BASIN

## Noah's Park

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It has always been difficult to stop the illegal trade of animals in the Amazon basin. According to IBAMA, the Brazilian institute for the defence of the environment, the problem is not so much finding and arresting the traders but the difficulties arising after confiscation. Where do you take the numerous animal species, almost always ill and weak and thus unable to live in freedom in their natural habitat? Returning them to nature would mean their certain death. But who can take care of them? You have to stop treating confiscation from a legal aspect alone and give it the wider scope of the protection of animals in extinction.



For this you need an organisation which ensures that the animals regain their health before returning them to the forest. It is not easy to tackle the numerous problems which inevitably arise when one is dealing with hundreds of animals of every age and species. Especially when the area involved is the inhospitable Amazon forest and when

the government is the first to be reluctant about allocating funds for this purpose.

Marc van Roosmalen, a Dutch biologist specialising in primates, has on his own initiative created a "Noah's Park", an extensive green area near to Manaus. Over 15 types of monkeys, parrots, otters, snakes and other rare examples of Brazilian fauna, rescued from the traders by IBAMA, are taken care of here. Marco, long involved with INPA (National Research Institute of the Amazon Basin), has with his wife Betty and two children undertaken this noble feat, unique in the world.



His success and recognition are the result of much hard work and a constant presence of spirit. The choice this Noah of 2000 has made will perhaps be considered a little old-fashioned by all those ecologists who rely on



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words rather than actions... And yet, thanks to his little big "ark", Noah is saving a great deal of nature.

## DEBATE

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"When I'm big I'll be...."

How many of us has uttered these words at least once!

But how many of us have kept faith with that child's voice when grown up?

One day we suddenly wake up in the real world and discover that we have taken a completely different road from what our inclination suggested.

As we grow up, a thousand external voices threaten our truth. When it comes to making a choice, the world is always ready to confuse us.

Often we are left holding just a few pieces of that truth which has by now been shattered.... Buried among our secret desires, our old dream has been put away for ever.

Dear children,

What do you want to do when you grow up?

Will you still manage to see your dream clearly?

What external factors do you think threaten your dream?

What characteristics do you think young people need to make their dreams come true in today's world?

Why is it important to follow our inclination and do what is most natural to us?