



NICOLE Foundation

2023 Annual Report

Opening



Welcome to the NICOLE Foundation's first annual report.

Our Foundation was established in February 2023 and what a journey it has been! When our sister organization, NICOLE (Nicole.org), decided to celebrate its 25th anniversary by establishing a foundation we underestimated two things. First, it took us almost 2 years from the idea to the effective establishment of the foundation and, second, we far more rapidly than expected got involved in projects and project opportunities than we thought was realistic.

The first underestimation was the result of a deliberate strategy to really think things through and make sure we had the right values, the right ambition, the right reasons and the right people to do what we felt the Foundation should be doing; think of something in the spirit of good project management or LEAN philosophy "plan slowly, act fast".

The second underestimation points to the fact that we seem to have found a true niche need, where, once we were started to get known in our networks, we were rapidly approached by different organisations around the globe with requests for help. While this is excellent news, it did put some strain on what was (or is) still a fledgling enterprise.

In this annual report you will see an overview of our activities since our establishment, the projects we're supporting, basic metrics, and some profiles of our volunteer community.

If you want to know more or want to get involved, please visit our website: www.nicolefound.org.

Johan De Fraye

President of the Nicole Foundation Board

About the Nicole Foundation



The NICOLE Foundation is a Belgian Private Foundation created as a distinct offshoot from NICOLE, a collective of professionals in the contaminated land sector spanning industry, consultancies, and academia.

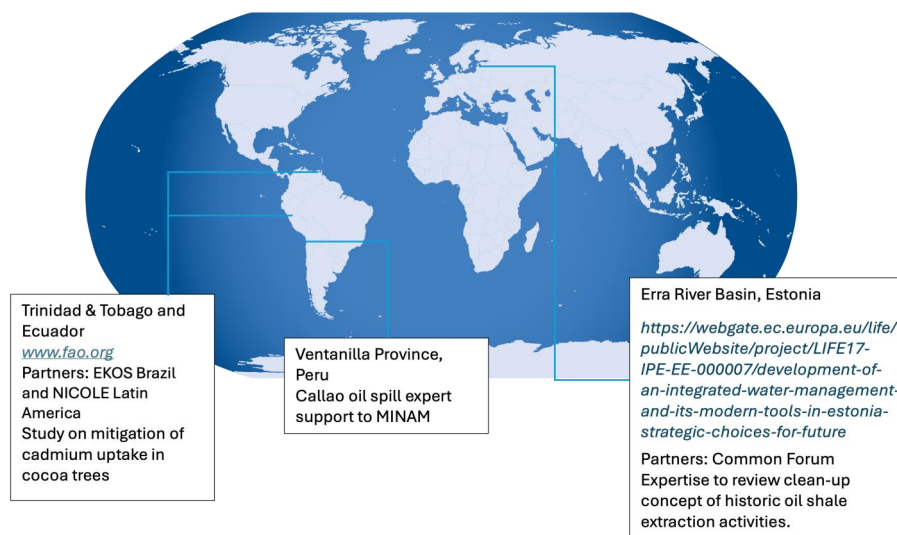
Although we share roots and some overlapping membership and volunteers, the NICOLE Foundation operates as an independent legal entity, guided by a unique mission, purpose, and leadership team.

Our connection to NICOLE is maintained through board member representation.

We endeavor to operate in accordance with our core values. We believe that **partnerships** are the key to accomplishing our mission. We strive to develop the most **effective** solutions possible. We are **accountable** to those we serve, and are concerned with the **credibility** of our actions and organization in the eyes of the public and our stakeholders.

The NICOLE Foundation realises its projects through its extensive and global network of professionals and donors in the contaminated land space. Our project support ranges from strategic road mapping, over capacity building to remedial design of complex soil and groundwater contamination.

Projects in 2023



Supporting the United Nations Food and Agriculture Programme and its Global Soil Partnership

The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) has been working towards the reduction of cadmium in cocoa beans since December 2021. It has been a collaborative effort involving experts from the GSP, NICOLE Foundation, NICOLE LATAM and Ekos Brazil. This joint project has been dedicated to developing and implementing tools and guidelines for the prevention and remediation of soil pollution. Specifically, the aim of the project was to assess and propose mitigation measures for the presence of cadmium in cocoa beans based on conceptual site models developed for the Eastern Lowlands (Trinidad and Tobago) and the State of Manabí (Ecuador).

The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) has been working towards the reduction of cadmium in cocoa beans since December 2021.

Given the several factors influencing cadmium's presence in cocoa beans, the project set out the following objectives for its initial stage:

- identify areas of concern for in-depth study, encompassing chemical pollutants, agricultural crops and pilot locations;
- identify previous and ongoing research efforts regarding cadmium in cocoa;
- visit pilot study areas and farms to perform interviews and assess the local context, both in terms of natural- and human-induced processes;
- develop conceptual models at the watershed level based on a risk assessment approach; and
- formulate conclusions and recommendations regarding possible solutions and subsequent actions.

[Assisting the Estonian Ministry of the Environment in reviewing oil shale extraction clean-up concepts](#)



1 - Wilson44691

In 2021, the Estonian Ministry of the Environment was granted EU funding under the Life Programme to remediate pollution from oil shale processing in the Erra river basin.

Common Forum, the EU Network of Member States Regulators, the NICOLE Foundation was solicited to participate in a workshop late 2023 in Tallinn. The aim of the workshop was to review and provide external input to the clean-up concepts.

[Providing expertise to the Peruvian Ministry of the Environment on the Callao oil spill](#)

On 15 January 2022 a crude oil spill occurred on the coast of the Ventanilla district in the constitutional province of Callao, Peru. It has been qualified by the Environmental Assessment and Control Agency as the greatest ecological disaster that has occurred in Peru.

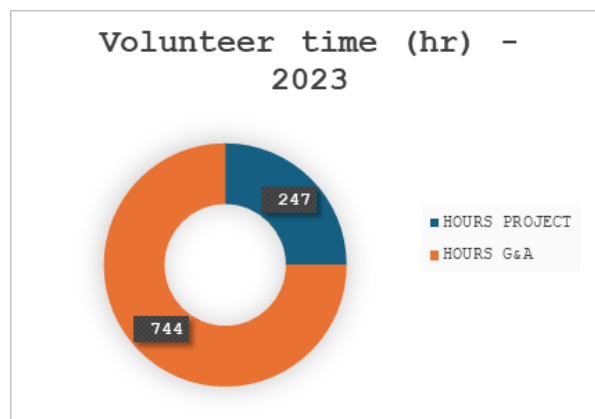
The Environmental Assessment and Control Agency of Peru has qualified this oil spill as the greatest ecological disaster that has occurred in Peru.

According to OEFA, the oil spill affects some 1.187 km² (458 sq mi) of sea and 1.740 km² (670 sq mi) of beach-coastal strip, about 17 beaches have been affected from the La Pampilla refinery to Peralvillo beach in Chancay and more than 500 ha (1,200 acres) of the protected natural areas of the National Reserve System of Guaneras Islands, Islets and Points and the Reserved Zone of Ancón. (source: Wikipedia)

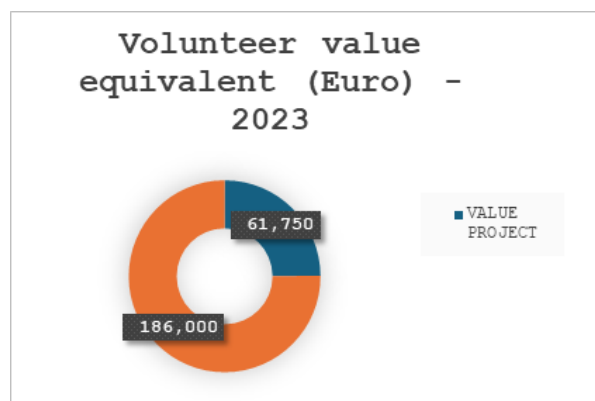
NICOLE Foundation is providing an expert to assist the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM) in the assessment of damages and remedial measures.

Metrics

In our first year, over 1000 hours of volunteer time were provided by several individuals. Given that this was our year of establishment, 75% of those hours were spent on internal systems, procedures, organizational setup and administration (G&A – General and administration). It is however our intent that at maturity this ratio is reversed and that we spend 90% of our volunteer hours on projects.



To monetize this volunteer time, we multiply every hour by EUR 250 (USD 270). Given that we provide senior expertise, we felt this was a correct reflection of the value our volunteers bring to the table. Overall, this means our first year of operation generated roughly EUR 60.000 of project value, while the administering of the foundation was valued at over EUR 180.000.



Six Board meetings were held, of which two were face to face.

Date	Board members present	Board members absent/excused
2-3 Feb (founding meeting)	8	0
17 Mar	8	0
28 Apr	7	1
9 Jun	8	0
27 Jul	5	3
26 Sep	6	2

Focus on one of NICOLE Foundation's volunteer experts



Where do you work and what do you do?

I am the CEO of Corporación Ambiental de México (CAM). CAM is a 30 years' old environmental consulting company that provides different types of social and environmental services in México and Latam. Besides planning and setting strategic goals for the company, Jerjes is promoting and executing groundwater and ecosystem scientific research programs with universities and institutes.

What project were you involved in for the NICOLE Foundation?

In partnership with Peru's Ministry of Environment (MINAM) I evaluate the environmental impact from an oil spill along the Ventanilla district coast in Western Peru.

Together with NICOLE Foundation team, we are and will be reviewing (during 2024) ongoing investigations to understand the oil spill's social and environmental impact on marine and coastal ecosystems.



2 - Jerjes Pantoja-Irrys

Those supporting the Nicole Foundation

Nicole Foundation thanks the following organisations and individuals who assisted us with funding, expertise and our operations.

Organisation/individual	Type of support
NICOLE	Operational funding
Alan Wilson (ERM)	Project expertise in Estonia
Elze-Lia Visser-Westerweele (Visser-Westerweele Environmental Consultancy)	Foundation operations and project proposal support
Josine Visser	Development of the Foundation's logo
Lisa Elliott (LJE Marketing)	Development of the Foundation's marketing strategy
Anneli Liljemark (Liljemark Consulting)	Proposal development for Ukraine project