



DALLA PARTE
DEGLI ANIMALI

LAV PRESS RELEASE – JUNE 26th 2020

GORGONA: THE ITALIAN PRISON-ISLAND BECOMES A MODEL OF NONVIOLENCE BETWEEN MAN AND ANIMALS. AFTER THE SLAUGHTER SHUTDOWN, THE ITALIAN ANIMAL RIGHTS NGO, LAV (WWW.LAV.IT/EN), RESCUES A FIRST GROUP OF 85 ANIMALS ON A SYMBOLIC "ARK OF FREEDOM".

LAV: WITH A STRIKING RESCUE OPERATION, WE HAVE TAKEN WITH US THE FIRST 85 ANIMALS, OUT OF THE 588, SAVED FROM SLAUGHTERING. 450 OF THEM, CALFS, PIGS, RABBITS, SHEEP, GOATS, MUST LEAVE THE ISLAND! WE NEED HELP TO MAKE THIS DREAM COME TRUE: FIND OUT HOW TO SUPPORT THE PROJECT AND BE PART OF THIS UNIQUE EXPERIENCE: www.lav.it/en/news/gorgona-ark-of-liberty

With a striking field operation, yesterday, June 25th, LAV – one of the former Italian animal rights NGOs - laid a new milestone in the relations between prisoners and animals, on the prison-island of Gorgona, in Tuscany.

After the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between LAV, the Municipality of Livorno and the Prison, last January, and the forced break imposed by the health emergency due to Covid-19, the project "*Gorgona, island of human and animal rights*" finally becomes alive: 85 animals (10 sheep and 75 birds) have been transferred to the mainland on board of a special boat used by LAV to transport them in maximum safety, with the assistance of a veterinarian and qualified staff. Saved from death by slaughter, they will live cared for and protected by LAV at the Semproniano Rescue Center and in other shelters for rescued animals.

"The displacement of these 85 animals, the first group out of a total of 450 that will have to leave the island, is necessary in order to renew the unique experience of solidarity and nonviolence between humans and animals on the prison-island of Gorgona, abruptly interrupted between 2015 and 2019, due to the beginning of livestock production and slaughtering. The end of slaughtering and the recovery of good practices of nonviolence is a great result obtained by LAV, thanks to all the people who supported us over long years of petitions and demonstrations, to the Municipality of Livorno and the Prison that have signed with us the Memorandum of Understanding, to the Tuscan Archipelago National Park and the Bicocca University of Milan, also part of the project, and,

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last but not least, thanks to the Undersecretary of Justice Vittorio Ferraresi, who visited the prison in 2019, encouraging the negotiations, that led us to this important achievement", Gianluca Felicetti, President of LAV, says .

Thanks to this agreement, all the 588 animals living on the island are safe and none of them will be exploited or killed for livestock production, moreover, the slaughterhouse will be dismantled. But for the project to live - and for the animals to be looked after in the best way - it is necessary to reduce the number of those currently living in Gorgona, as a result of the reproduction activity encouraged for the purposes of food production.

"With this first symbolic 'Ark of Liberty' sailed to the mainland, we have laid the foundation stone but there is still much to do - Roberto Bennati, LAV General Manager, and chief of this field operation, adds - we at LAV are happy to have taken responsibility for an essential part for the success of the project, which requires organizational commitment, economic resources, professional skills, and a great deal of passion, in order not to give up while facing all the difficulties of such a complex operation, that will be followed by other similar field operations, in the next few months. We want to thank all the people who have allowed us to get here, and all those who will continue to support this animal liberation initiative, in the coming days and months".

To make the dream of "Gorgona, island of human and animal rights" come true, everyone is needed! This is why LAV calls to supporters, citizens, and to all those who believe in the right to a second life opportunity for every human or animal being: everyone can become part of this unique experience, supporting the Gorgona Project, with a donation on

The Memorandum of Understanding, in fact, provides that approximately 450 animals must gradually leave the island: LAV will ensure their maintenance - in addition to the maintenance of those who will remain in Gorgona - and will find suitable accommodations for them, with the obligation, for the adopters, of non-slaughtering and non-reproduction, allocating a contribution of 45,000 euros in two years.

The animals that will stay on the island will be treated by the prisoners in the framework of a program managed by the Bicocca University of Milan, and will be also involved in the management of environmentally friendly tourism on the island, which is part of the Archipelago National Park.

Finally, as required by the Memorandum of Understanding, LAV will soon be engaged in guided tours on the island to enhance the ethical, environmental and educational aspects of the initiative and in educational interventions related to the experience of Gorgona, focusing on topics such as animals rights, and of the value of life and all living beings.

"Our wish – LAV says - is that the Gorgona "model", based on the relationship between man and animal as a means of 're-education and rehabilitation', no longer based on exploitation but on mutual care and respect, may soon become a model for other realities as well, and that it may serve as an example for our society, which needs – now more than ever - to deeply rethink its relationship with animals and the environment."

June 26th, 2020

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