

The Forgotten Island

Pre-Title section:

00:00:05:00

Socotra... an island of legend shrouded in mystery.

The final resting place of the mythical bird... the Phoenix.

When it died, its nest was deposited upon the altar of the Temple of the Sun, in the island of Panchaia, known today as... Socotra.

00:00:23:00

Named 'the Isle of the Blessed', it was home to the best enchanters. Marco Polo recorded that they could raise winds to force passing merchant ships onto the deadly rocks of the inhospitable coast.

00:00:36:00

Socotra... one of the last unexplored places on earth... an island that time forgot.

OPENING TITLES:

1)
AXELL COMMUNICATION
Presents

2)

The Forgotten Island

3)
A film directed by
Philippe AXELL

00:01:08:00

Part of Yemen, Socotra is 250 km east of Somalia and 350 km south of the Arabian peninsula.

It is Yemen's largest island, with a length of 135 kilometres and a width of 42 kilometres. Surrounding it are 3 smaller outlying islands.

In tertiary times it separated from the mainland during the continental drift. This isolated ancient flora and fauna that soon vanished in other areas. These later evolved into species found nowhere else in the world.

00:01:43:00

Socotra's unique environment with such high levels of endemism makes it comparable only with the Galapagos Islands.

It has remained a well kept secret because for eight months each year it is cut off from the rest of the world by monsoons, dangerous seas, high winds, and no sheltered anchorage.

An incredible set of circumstances has kept the island isolated until the twenty first century.

00:02:18:00

Little is known about the ancient history of the island.

Professor Christian Robin, a French historian, has been studying Yemen's history for 30 years.

00:02:32:00

ITV Christian Robin

If we go very far back in time, for example, we don't know when man first came to inhabit Socotra. No research into prehistoric times has been done. But there can be little doubt that such habitation is probably ancient, especially given that the island offers quite favourable conditions, especially in terms of caves.

00:02:54:00

We are here in a cave and we can clearly see that it is an extremely convenient shelter. We've taken a look to see if there are any traces of ancient habitation. We found none on the surface, but of course this does not necessarily mean anything.

00:03:19:00

Alexander the Great conquered the island to provide the medicinal Aloe for his armies.

An ancient Greek mariner's manual from the first century, gives a detailed description of the precious Socotran goods that could be traded... frankincense, myrrh, aloe, turtle shells, and a red resin called cinnabar.

In Roman times, it was part of the Kingdom of Hadramaout which ruled the south Arabian Peninsula.

00:03:46:00

For strategic reasons the Portuguese conquered Socotra in 1507. The remains of a fort and a mosque that they converted into a church are the ONLY archaeological relics that exist today.

Hedi Dridi, a Tunisian archaeologist, has come with Professor Robin to investigate the island's mysterious past.

00:04:18:00

ITV Heidi Dridi

From an archaeological point of view, we know relatively little about Socotra. There are very few remains

00:04:26:00

We are here at what is called the Portuguese Fort, one of Socotra's best-preserved sites. The history of this fortress is relatively well known, thanks to the Portuguese reports of the day.

00:04:40:00

In 1506, a fleet left Lisbon, led by Tristan d'Acounia. It arrived here in April 1507 and attacked the fortress, which was taken in just six hours. The Portuguese renamed it Fort St. Michel.

00:04:53:00

Portuguese reports tell us that below the fort there was a mosque.

00:05:05:00

After taking the fort, the Portuguese transformed this mosque into a church, which they called Our Lady of Victory, in honour of their conquest.

00:05:26:00

The British were the next nation to control Socotra. It was of little interest to them compared with the lucrative trade at the established port of Aden.

In 1967 Socotra fell under Soviet control... closing it to visitors for military purposes.

When the Russians left, the island was still inaccessible because of the Yemeni civil war.

00:05:53:00

Only in the last few years has it been 'open' to foreigners.

00:06:01:00

Today Socotra attracts many scientists and conservationists because its study is of universal value.

The United Nations Development Program is working towards the sustainable development and protection of the island's environment. The chief technical advisor is Dr. Eduardo Zandri.

ITV Eduardo Zandri

00.06.21.00

The Socotra archipelago ranks amongst the top 10 islands in the world in terms of botanical conservation importance.

It has a level of endemism, which means of plants that are found only on this archipelago, that is very high.

Out of approximately 900 species of plants recorded, we have 300 that are found only here.

The plants that are endemic are also dominant in the Socotra landscape, and you see the Socotra Dragon Blood, and other species that are found here, characterising the landscape throughout the island.

We are not talking about small, rare species that only botanists will notice, but its really an important part of the local landscape and of the local culture, because local people have several traditional uses of all these plants.

00:07:43:00

The Deksam Plateau is known for having the highest concentration of the famous Dragon Blood Trees.

Like the rest of the island the plateau is made up of a stratified layer of limestone.

Legend has it that there was a fight between an elephant and a dragon. The elephant crushed the dragon... from its blood sprung the Dragon's Blood Tree.

00:08:08:00

Very little is known about the Dragon Blood Tree. The bark is a spongy material very different to wood. This makes the tree impossible to age using known methods. The Socotrans believe the trees to be thousands of years old. They are not regenerating and how they reproduce remains a mystery.

00:08:29:00

In antiquity, cinnabar, the red resin extracted from the Dragon's Blood tree, was worth 10 times the weight of gold. It was used by gladiators as an antiseptic and the Romans dyed marble with it.

00:09:01:00

Selim knows how to extract the Dragon's Blood from the tree... this does not harm it.

It is used locally as a treatment for dysentery and burns, fastening loose teeth, make-up, staining glass and as paint to decorate pottery.

00:10:01:00

Only in times of extreme drought does Selim feed the leaves to his livestock.

00:10:14:00

Selim is from the village of Hagino. The inhabitants of the mountains and central parts of the island...the Joboliah... are the semi- nomadic Socotran Bedouins... descendants of the first south Arabian tribes that came to Socotra.

00:10:32:00

Selim takes the Dragon's Blood back to his house.
His mother heats the sap or fine powder over a fire until it gets sticky.

00:10:53:00

Then she rolls it into little pellets to be sold.

00:11:20:00

The many caves and small crevices in the rock make perfect homes and pens for livestock.

00:12:03:00

One of the most visible uses of Dragon's Blood is as a decoration for pottery.

The potters still use the same techniques as those recorded thousands of years earlier.

00:12:32:00

Because of the dry climate natural clay is not easily found.

The sifted red earth is mixed with water to make the clay.

00:12:58:00

No potter's wheel is used. The pottery is made by hand. Sea shells and small stones are used to smooth the surface.

00:13:18:00

Incredibly, since time immemorial, there have been no variations in the two main designs... round pots and incense holders.

The pots are then left to harden.

00:13:37:00

No kiln is used and the pottery is baked on an open fire.

00:13:55:00

Dragon's Blood is heated and then placed in a rag. It must be applied to the pots when they are hot.

00:14:12:00

Each type of pot has its own specific Dragon's Blood markings ... these have existed since ancient times.

00:14:42:00

Socotra has the world's greatest variation in Frankincense trees.

00:14:57:00

Crystals are scraped from the tree to be used as incense. These are then placed upon hot coals in incense pots.

00:15:17:00

Every child knows that another use is to chew the crystals directly... as a natural chewing gum that whitens the teeth.

00:15:44:00

The north-eastern part of the island is known to contain several caves of large dimension.

Professor Robin is joined by a team of speleologists to investigate a cavern known as Hoq Cave.

00:16:05:00

This expedition requires a certain logistic as the cave entrance cannot be reached by jeep and the exploration will take a few days.

00:16:30:00

Local villagers kindly provide assistance in carrying the camping and caving equipment over the 3 hour climb to the cave.

00:17:21:00

In the morning, a woman from a nearby fishing village brings bread and fish to the camp that has been set up underneath the impressive cave entrance.

00:17:46:00

ITV Christian Robin

“In ancient times, the people of the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula spoke a single language – or more precisely a single group of languages, which was not Arabic. Interestingly, in the case of Socotra, the language that descended from these ancient south Arabian tongues was preserved.”

“This small group of south Arabian languages, which we call modern sub-Arabic, is of great linguistic interest. These languages are very different from modern Arabic, however they do retain a certain number of characteristics that come from the oldest Semitic languages.”

“Of course there are similarities in vocabulary. However, in terms of phonetics, we find a whole series of consonants – notably lateral consonants, which gives us a clear insight into the way in which these very ancient Semitic languages were spoken.”

00:19:38:00

ITV Christian Robin

“Other than a few studies on the language, which were performed by an Austrian mission at the start of the 20th century, the island remains unknown in terms of scientific research... Be that for the study of the fauna, flora, the language, or archaeological research. We are still at the very beginning of the scientific exploration of this island.”

“Recently, a group of Belgian speleologists, discovered a major cave network measuring about 2 kilometres in depth and containing a certain number of vestiges and artefacts. These could prove that humans were active inside the cave. This is the reason why I came here with a colleague... to catalogue these artefacts and to see what they can teach us about the island of Socotra.”

00:20:55:00

At the entrance, there are many clues that shepherds use the dripping water that falls into both natural and manmade basins.

Pottery is used to collect the fresh water for human consumption, while the basins are reserved for the passing goat herds of the nomadic mountain tribes.

00:21:19:00

The cave is spectacular.

The ground is covered by gypsum crystals and rare speleothems that are totally unknown in the subterranean world of Europe.

00:21:37:00

Cave pearls lie scattered in little ponds.

00:21:53:00

The gigantic dimensions of this gallery are impressive! It is over 30 metres wide and 20 metres high.

00:22:27:00

From the long calcite stalactites, delicate crystals of aragonite and gypsum have formed, creating a world that is truly breathtaking.

00:22:51:00

This is one of the most extraordinary caves the speleologists have ever explored.

Who could have guessed that such a marvel could be found on a remote island lost in the Indian Ocean?

00:23:07:00

After 600 meters of exploration, the first traces of a human presence appear.

00:23:15:00

SPEECH

HD: Here we have 3 ... this one with a superb decoration ... and this one ...

00:23:37:00

Further into the cave inscriptions are found written in clay and charcoal. Some are in a South Arabian language that disappeared in the 4th century A.D. The others are in ancient African and Indian dialects.

Most of them appear to be signatures rather than more elaborate texts.

00:24:06:00

SPEECH

CR: Ah yes... Curious... there's quite a number of them, a whole group... This is particularly interesting... there are not many drawings of boats, none of them in Yemen... aside from a few examples found in **Ophar**... It appears to be an ancient vessel given the type of rudder with an oar.

00:24:25:00

The ancient boat is significant. It reinforces the idea that the early visitors to this cave were not only inhabitants of the island, but also travellers from abroad.

The different languages in the inscriptions also confirm this.

00:25:06:00

SPEECH

CR: The writing is very clear, but what is less clear is the direction. This is Boustrophedon – meaning the first line is read right to left, and the second line left to right.

00:25:22:00

The explorers find a total of 48 texts. Incredibly, those written with charcoal, still have the charcoal beside them... left by their last users hundreds of years ago.

00:25:37:00

A wooden tablet is discovered. It lies underneath an incense holder. The incense holder is of the same design used today... but the calcite formations covering it are evidence of its extremely old age.

00:25:54:00

SPEECH

CR: Here's another small incense holder. The shape is a bit different. It's crudely made... the four small crests that crown its neck are rather curious.

00:26:13:00

Further into the cave, the speleologists have spotted another wooden tablet that is in better condition than the first one.

00:26:22:00

SPEECH

CR: There is the famous tablet... I'm beginning to have fewer doubts about its authenticity... given all the south Arabian inscriptions we've seen along the way... What is rather surprising is to find a text in Aramaic... of the Palmyrean type... here in Yemen.

00:26:41:00

There's no easy explanation... especially since this is not a common finding... There is nothing like it in Palmyre, the climate would not allow it...

It appears to be a fairly unique piece... I don't recall ever seeing any such wooden tablet in a museum... I don't think I've ever seen anything like it.

00:27:06:00

The letters have been carved deeply into the wood... if you put the light at an angle it makes it easier to read.

00:27:17:00

It doesn't seem to have much relation to the history of the island. ... It seems to have been brought here... to a place you wouldn't expect to find it.

00:27:25:00

“In the month of Tamuz, the 25th day of the year 569, me, Abgar, son of Abshamaya ShMMR, I brought my first offerings here. That the ‘God’ who is our master blesses you, here, you, man who reads this tablet and that he blesses those who leave the tablet in its place.”

00:27:49:00

SPEECH:

CR: We are about 1 1/2 km. from the entrance, and the speleologists tell us that no animals would enter this far into the cave. But the edges seem to have been gnawed upon, by what appear to be teeth.

I suggest you gather up all of the little bits and pieces you can find. It would be very interesting to find out what kind of wood it is. I think we can safely say that it is not local.

00:28:13:00

The tablet contains a precise date... 569 of the Selucid era which is 258 A.D. It is written in Aramaic... the language spoken by Jesus of Nazareth... but it comes from Palmyre, a city in present day Syria.

As the team get to the end of the cave... there are the remains of wooden torches, more pottery and inscriptions.

More than 17 centuries ago, this cave must have been some type of sanctuary. The first one ever discovered so far into a cave.

00:28:54:00

On the ground... calcified into the rock are the footprints of men and children that have been frozen into the stone... like a snapshot of the mystical ritual that took place in this underground temple.

00:29:22:00

The team return along the north coast to Hadibou... the capital.

Professor Robin and Hedi Dridi visit the local authorities to declare the incredible findings.

00:30:00:00

ITV CR

A cave such as that of Hoq – with its considerable length, the difficulty of access to its farthest sections, and the fact of having a whole series of vestiges showing that ancient peoples from all over visited this cave on numerous

occasions and in a fairly intensive manner – is something unique in the ancient world, at least to my knowledge.

00:30:28:00

The texts discovered in the Hoq cave are of interest because they show that sailors and merchants from all over came to the island of Socotra. This sheds light on how the island's economy functioned in olden days.

00:30:44:00

It wasn't an island where trade was completely controlled by the Kingdom of Hadramaout, which would have imposed the export of products from the island to the great port of Hadramaout on the Yemen coast. But we have the impression, on the contrary, that ships from all over could stop at the island, either to take on fresh water, or more likely to trade goods. There was therefore no absolute control of trade, as was previously believed.

00:31:28:00

Nobody knows the total population of Socotra. It has been estimated at 40,000.

The inhabitants of Hadibou and the coastal areas... the Sahriyah... are of mixed Arab, Indian, and African descent. Hadibou is the largest and most cosmopolitan city.

00:31:57:00

Besides dates and the occasional collection of wild honey, nothing is cultivated on the island. Socotrans live of fish and their livestock... namely goats and small cows.

00:32:31:00

In Hadibou vegetables are grown privately in small gardens. Since 1999, weekly flights from mainland Yemen have brought food and other goods to Hadibou.

Many of the houses have no running water. There is only electricity for a few hours a day.

00:33:06:00

Despite a long-standing connection with Christianity, today Islam is the official religion. This is more prevalent in Hadibou and along coastal areas. The Socotran Bedouin of the inner parts of the island are only nominally Muslim. Some even describe their practices as pagan.

00:33:28:00

Every Friday afternoon people flock to Hadibou... riding in the back of pick-up trucks. They come to watch the Friday afternoon football match.

00:34:09:00

The evenings' entertainment begins when a troop of musicians ride through the city on their way to a wedding.

00:35:17:00

Although Hadibou is densely populated, most Socotrans live in small villages.

00:35:24:00

Socotrans say 'hello' by rubbing noses together.

00:35:31 11:00

On the south coast, the village of Nawjad is located by the sea.

Here, no electricity, no running water. Life starts with sunrise, and stops at dusk.

00:35:46:00

Although the walls are made of piled rocks, the houses have roofs in dried palm leaves.

When the monsoons come, their homes are washed away or flooded.

Fortunately the island's geology provides an adequate solution to this problem.

The whole village then moves to the many caves for shelter.

00:36:43:00

The cave is not far from the village. It is more or less permanently fitted so that, when the bad season comes, all the families can immediately settle into their already prepared grounds. Little stone walls and boundaries clearly mark the territory for each family.

00:37:04:00

Issa lights a fire by rubbing sticks together. Making fire is a man's job and he could only marry once he had learnt the ancient art.

Besides very remote locations, Socotra may be one of the only places on earth where men still make fire without any type of modern devices.

00:37:42:00

The cavern is not just a shelter. It provides plenty of fresh water for Issa's family.

00:37:53:00

For Socotrans, their livestock is the main resource with fishing. Issa's family is very fortunate. They live by the sea, so they can benefit from both.

00:38:06:00

Socotrans have great respect for animals. Their death is necessary for the survival of the family and the tribe, but it is made in dignity, with prayers before the final moment.

00:38:59:00

No part of the animal is wasted.

Issa's wife prepares the goatskin to make a gourd for carrying milk and water.

00:39:13:00

Since agriculture is virtually non-existent on the island, an overwhelming majority of islanders own livestock. Most of the feed that their herds eat is natural forage rather than cultivated fodders and pastures.

The rural people of Socotra are largely divided into tribal groupings. It is a very structured society with rules dating from centuries ago.

A tribe is made up of a number of clans, generally members of a same family or relatives.

Each clan selects a leader, called the “muquddam”.

These leaders then select a tribal leader, the sheick.

00:39:53:00

Due to seasonal transhumance, Socotrans have at least two and often more settlements, including quarters for humans and livestock.

00:40:03:00

Traditionally, land had always belonged to individual tribes or neighbourhood groups.

The caves and dwelling places formed the basis of the rights for an individual family or clan to land ownership.

00:40:16:00

But today the introduction of official courts and administration have somehow disturbed the ancient system.

The main question is; will Socotrans resist influence from the outside world, while improving their living condition, and preserve their island's uniqueness.

ITV Eduardo Zandri

00:40:35:00

I think in Socotra we have an exceptional situation whereby development had not reached this island until a few years ago.

Essentially the turning point was the opening of the new airport in 1999.

Before that there was almost no development whatsoever happening, very little contact with the outside world, and in the same time the local people had preserved the unique nature of this island by living in balance with their natural resources.

This balance, this equilibrium, has been maintained by the local people for centuries and this is a time when the influence from outside is threatening this very delicate situation.

00:41:19:00

We are at a time where we have a chance to make a difference, and if we come in with the right sort of development approach we might be able to preserve this balance between people and nature and bring an improvement to their life, which is very much needed.

There are not many places in the world where this is possible. Its a very unique situation.

00:41:45:00

Our conservation efforts on the island started in 1994 with a proposal of establishing the Socotra archipelago as a UNESCO biosphere reserve.

They were supported by the government and international organisations who then came in with projects to prepare all the base line studies and carry out all the concertations with local communities. It was necessary to prepare a conservation zoning plan and the plan was passed in September 2000 as a presidential decree for the conservation of the islands.

This is now in the implementation phase where the local team of approximately 70 staff is carrying forward the objectives set in this conservation plan.

00:42:26:00

Sue Christie : OK. Its 30 going west to east!

00:42:34:00

Dr. Sue Christie and colleague Neil Oakman are part of a botanical team that are studying the Socotran Aloe.

ITV Sue Christie

00:42:48:00

Aloe Peria is one of a large genus of succulent plants which are foun throughout Africa and South Est Asia.

It is an endemic specie to Socotra and is one of 2 or 3 species of Aloes on the island.

It is used by the local people for a variety of purposes.

The local name for Aloe Peria is Taip in the socotri language and it is used locally for medicament and exported to the Gulf for use as cosmetics.

00:43:18:00

It is harvested sustainably. It doesn't damage the plant and they make very sure that they don't harm the plant when they are harvesting it by maintaining the central core of the leaf.

They always harvest lower leaves, and it is harvested in 2 different ways in different parts of the island:

On one part of the island it is only used locally and they cut the tips of the leaves off and use the tip that is cut off directly applied to wounds or scrapes as an antiseptic.

In areas where it is commercially harvested, their harvesting mechanism is somewhat different. They cut the leaves off near the base of the plant and take all of the harvested leaves into a pit lined with either plastic or goat skin and the juice is allowed to drain naturally into that pit and collected.

It is then bulked together and packaged in small goat skins and this then sold to either local buyers or for export to other buyers of the Gulf.

It is heavy product. It is very dense and this would probably weight a couple of kilograms.

It can also be used for treatment and prevention of malaria. Then it is drunk and then it is just dropped out into a cup.

Socotris have a lovely relationship with the natural environment. They have a traditional respect for the natural environment and the way of working with it which has been honed over the centuries.

00:45:00:00

Neil Okman: One of the sustainable development things you would try to carry on is planting these close to the villages so they could grow their replacement building materials... for the future.

00:45:15:00

Sue Christie: We are conducting an ecological survey of Aloe Peria to look at the interaction of the plant with its environment, and with the other plants and animals which are living with it.

This will both have theoretical implications in terms of learning more about the plant itself but also practical applications if it does turn out that there should be an increased harvest of the plant or possibly cultivation of it.

00:45:56:00

Sue Christie: Go straight to the single date palm, the third one over. GO!

00:46:07:21

Slightly to your right.

00:46:16:00

OK

00:46:20:00

We are looking at a variety of factors that could affect the plant's growth. Where it lives on the island, in different areas, in different relationship with the coast, different altitudes...

We are looking at where it grows with regards to the slopes of the land and which direction its facing, soil conditions, amount of rock, because it does seem to enjoy very rocky areas as opposed to sandy areas, and also looking at a variety of biological characteristics ; the plants that grow with it, the animals that may coexist with it and possibly would prey upon it such as insect predators or goats.

And finally we are looking at the population of the Aloe themselves, the health of the plants, size of them, their reproductive state, the reproductive generational structure of the population, as well as various characteristics such as how are the leaves, the colour of the plants, and the degree to which they are reproducing by seeds at various times of the year.

00:47:34:00

The reason we are studying Aloe Peria is to look at this as a possibility for providing additional local employment and economic gain.

It's one of the few sustainable crops that could be used on the island. There is the option for cultivating it possibly, depending on the demand, and there is possibility for increased demand for other uses.

00:48:16:00

Adeeb Abdullah is the manager of Socotra's first nursery. He collects seeds and cuttings from the island's plants. The seedlings are studied and then re-planted around the island.

Modern concepts of conservation are not new ideas to the Socotrans.

Because of their isolation Socotrans have learned to live in balance with their natural resources. This was a matter of survival.

00:48:52:00

Over the centuries, they have developed a set of traditional rules to preserve and maintain their resources. These ancient laws are still practised today.

To avoid over-grazing livestock is regularly moved. Shepherdesses walk for miles with their cattle, following the rain, to preserve vegetation cover. Only certain branches of certain trees can be used as feed for livestock depending upon the time of the year.

00:49:22:00

Strict rules ensure the collection of ONLY dead wood for firewood.

00:49:46:00

Fish are the staple food of the Socotran people. Because of this dependence on fish, long ago... fishermen developed their own protected areas where fishing was allowed only at certain times of the year.

Each month, at the time of the full moon, there is a week where fishing is prohibited.

There are places where no net fishing is allowed and they only fish by line.

Some species of fish are not caught. Between June and October fishing is limited because of the harsh weather conditions.

Today there is a threat of unregulated fishing by outside fishermen. An increasing exterior demand to buy Socotran fish is putting pressure on the traditional laws.

00:50:55:00

Socotrans want and need improved healthcare, communication over the island and with the mainland and more efficient water distribution. Not even talking about electricity, a luxury that will be confined to rare privileged areas for many years to come.

00:51:13:00

Development is an essential issue in this remote part of the world. But then, what kind of development?

00:51:24:00

When the British left the island in 1967, their last scientific expedition concluded that the exceptional flora would disappear within the next ten years due to overexploitation and grazing.

Thirty years later, when the first botanists set foot again on the island, they were astonished to see that nothing had changed since the Scottish botanist Isaac Balfour made his first description of Socotra in 1880.

00:51:54:00

Now is a crucial stage in Socotra's history... the potential to save the island is still in reach.

While our western civilizations only discovered the concepts of conservation and sustainable development a few years ago, the Socotrans have been practicing and applying those methods for thousands of years. It was a matter of survival on such an isolated island.

00:52:21:00

Socotrans already have the skills necessary to preserve their resources. They only hope they can embrace the future without losing their traditional lifestyle and their unique island.

END CREDITS

Editor
Christophe FREDERICK-LINGLET

Assistant Director
Sally EL HOSAINI

Cameraman
David GUEULETTE

Sound Recording
Jean-Paul COURMONT

Location Assistants
Alain GRIGNARD

Robert LEVEQUE

Special Effects
Nicolas FOUARGE

Voices
Richard WELLS
Marc STEGEMAN

Production Manager
Els MEYNS

Production Assistant
Annemie DE FOUR

Scientific Advisors
Prof. Christian ROBIN
Dr. Hedi DRIDI
Dr. Sue CHRISTIE
Dr. Edoardo ZANDRI
Dr. Niel OAKMAN

With the precious help of
Nizar AL MEHDAR
Mohammed AMER

Special thanks to
Peter DE GEEST
Hussein AMR BISALEM
Dr. Yussef ABDULLAH
Abdullah ALANSI
Abdullah Mohammed YUNIS

Socotra Karst Project
Ministry of Information
YEMENIA
Environmental Protection Agency
UNDP

A production
AXELL COMMUNICATION

Produced and Directed by
Philippe AXELL

Copyright Axell Communication 2004