

**Project update: December 2019**

## **Phase 1: Typology and causes of human-chimpanzee interaction**

### **1.1. Meetings with stakeholders, administration of interviews and group discussions**

The Principal Investigator (PI) travelled to Cameroon on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019. A meeting was held with the program coordinator of Centre for Indigenous Resources Management and Development (CIRMAD) Mr Emmanuel Liyong Sama on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Fieldwork started on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Household semi-structural interview administration (fig. 1a-c) and a participatory farm inventory (fig. 2 a & b) were conducted in five villages around the Kom-Wum Forest Reserve (Baiso, Bu, Mbengkas, Mbonkissu and Mentang). Focus group discussions were conducted in each village separately for men and women and consisted of six to seven individuals per group (fig. 1d). The Primates of Africa West African Pocket Identification Guide and West African Mammal Species Identification Guide were used in interviews and focus group discussions (Kingdon, 2001, Oates, 2010). Overall, 152 semi-structured interviews and six focused group discussions were conducted, and questions related to the background of the respondents, typology of human-wildlife conflict, species involved, the kind of losses incurred, and protection strategy employed by farmers were asked.

### **1.2. Typology of human-chimpanzee interaction**

The killing of hunting dogs by chimpanzees and crop raids by monkeys, rodents and birds were reported by the locals to be the major kind of human-wildlife conflict in Kom-Wum Forest Reserve and surrounding forests.

### **1.3. Animal species involved in conflicts and the most destructive animals**

A few respondents, 7 % (N = 11) reported the killing of hunting dogs by chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes ellioti*) and olive baboon (*Papio anubis*). Two hunters reported that chimpanzees are aggressive when they see dogs and will attack humans if they get very close. No respondent classified chimpanzees among the most destructive animals, and a majority of respondents 93 % (N = 141) reported that they did not raid crops. Farmers reported during focus group discussions, that chimpanzees were calm and scared other crop foraging monkeys away around their crop fields. A majority of respondents 93 % (N = 141) reported crop foraging by the cane rat (*Thryonomys gregorianus*), baboon (*Papio anubis*), patas monkey (*Erythrocebus patas*), mona monkey (*Cercopithecus mona*), tantalus monkeys (*Chlorocebus aethiops tantalus*), putty-nosed monkey (*Cercopithecus nictitans ludio*), bush fowl (*Scally francolin*), duikers (*Cephalophus spp*), bushbuck (*Tragelaphus spp*), rat mole (*Cricetomys emini*) and squirrel (*Paraxerus cooperi*). The four most destructive wildlife reported in descending order were cane rat (*Thryonomys gregorianus*), baboon (*Papio anubis*), patas monkey (*Erythrocebus patas*) and tantalus monkey (*Chlorocebus aethiops tantalus*).

### **1.4. Crops cultivated and crop damage by wild animals**

Respondents reported the cultivation of maize (*Zea mays*), sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*), beans (*Phaseolus spp*), okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*), cacao (*Theobroma cacao*), peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*), garden huckleberry (*Solanum melanocerasum*), coffee (*Coffea arabica*), pineapple (*Ananas comosus*), sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*), pepper (*Capsicum spp*), cocoyams (*Colocasia esculenta*), cassava (*Manihot esculenta*), banana (*Musa spp*), rice (*Oryza spp*), yams (*Dioscorea spp*), mangoes (*Mangifera spp*), pumpkin (*Cucurbita spp*) and avocado (*Persea americana*) in their localities. Maize was reported as the most crop forage by all wild

animals and also the important food crop cultivated. The cane rats were reported to forage, mainly on maize, rice, potatoes, cassava, sugar cane, groundnuts at all stages of the plant life cycle. Baboon, patas monkey and tantalus monkey and mona monkey destroyed cacao, plantains and maize especially at the fruiting phase of their life cycle. Bush fowls frequently foraged on maize, pepper, pumpkins, huckleberry, cocoyams, yams, groundnuts, and pineapple. The rat mole foraged mostly on maize, cassava, cacao and peanuts.

### 1.5. Preventive measures employed by farmers

Crop guarding/noisemaking/fire/scarecrow 54 % (N = 83), hunting/trapping 28 % (N = 42), fencing/clearing 10 % (N = 16) and poisoning 8 % (N = 11) were the most preventive measures reported by respondents during interviews and focus group discussions. Crop guarding (fig. 2a), scarecrow (fig. 2b) and trapping (fig. 2c) were the most preventive strategies encountered during participatory farm inventory.

### 1.6. Perception of respondents to chimpanzee numbers

A predominant proportion of respondents 60 % (N = 91) perceived that chimpanzee numbers are increasing in Kom-Wum Forest Reserve and surrounding forests while 40 % (N = 61) reported that chimpanzee numbers are decreasing. The responses varied across villages depending on how frequently chimpanzees are encountered. Most respondents in villages with high encounter rates of chimpanzees (Baiso, Mbongkissu, and Mbengkas) reported that chimpanzee numbers are increasing compared to communities with very low encounter rates of chimpanzees (Bu and Mentang).



Figure 1: The PI conducting a semi-structural interview with a) a farmer in Bu village, b) an ecoguard in Baiso, c) with a mat trader in Baiso and d) a focus group discussion in Baiso.



Figure 2: Preventive strategies employed by farmers against maize foraging by wild animals in and around Kom-Wum Forest Reserve with a) scarecrow b) guarding and c) trapping.

## 2. Challenges and further planning

We started fieldwork on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 instead of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 due to delays we encounter on our way to the study area because of the ongoing crises in the region. We did not conduct interviews in Moghom village because of the same reason above. Phase two of fieldwork to determine ecological and human factors influencing chimpanzee nest site selection will begin on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2019.