

## **Project Update: January 2010**

The following is an update of activities

### **1. Food consumption interviews**

We gathered data on type and volume of food items consumed during one week period for 108 households in 10 rural settlements along the eastern sector of the study area, and for 60 families within the capital, Malabo. We asked the person in charge of cooking about the food eaten the day before (ingredients, quantity, status, price, origin, and age and sex of the members who ate it), and we trained them to write the same for the following 6 days more in order to obtain a full week of food consumed by family. This is novel since studies previously studied only obtained data through 24-hours recalls or up to three days.

### **2. Households characteristics interviews**

**Family structure:** at the same time we undertook the consumption interviews we collected information about all members of the family: age, sex, educational level, ethnic group, origin, time resident in the settlement and livelihood activities.

**Wealth rank:** in order to classify households according to wealth rank for further analysis we drew up a questionnaire to gather information about household expenses, incomes per activities, other incomes, and presence of wealth indicators (previously selected by focus groups). In this questionnaire, we also ask what activities were undertaken by family heads in the past, as well as the reasons for undertaking the ones they are involved in presently. Further information of time and activities dedicated to farming and hunting in each household was also gathered. Data collection is currently being undertaken and up till now we have surveyed 19 out of the 108 rural settlements and three out of 60 in Malabo.

### **3. Villages characteristics information**

We are also collecting in an informal way any interesting information about the life in the village both, in the past and in present (e.g. access to food, water, roads, other services - transport, light, coverage, health services, job opportunities near the village, celebrations, needs, initiatives of agriculture or livestock, other initiatives, attitude towards these initiatives, etc.)

### **4. Points of sale information**

Collecting information about carcasses sold in Malabo Market was not possible due to the lack of cooperation of the sellers since the Decree num. 72/2007 came into force in October 2008. By this decree the hunting and consumption of monkeys and other primates in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is prohibited. However, we are collecting data in one rural point of considerable importance: Basilé Fang village. This village is located at the base of the only road to the Pico where it crosses the Riaba-Malabo road. We think that the most animals hunted in the Pico that arrives at the Malabo Market, go through this locality, so intercepting the trade at Basile Fang will allow us to estimate extraction of bushmeat by

professional hunters in the Pico. This village is also an important concentration centre for sale of bushmeat to drivers and other passers by and also a significant sale point for cooked bushmeat. Since August 2009, we have been collecting daily data from the largest of the three bars that serves cooked bushmeat, and the only one that serves it daily. This bar sells also on the road and in Malabo Market and other places of Malabo. We are recording number, sex, weigh, length, status, method and place of hunt, and destination (including price and place of sale) of all the carcasses hunted by this bar. We are also collecting information of the consumers of these bar (origin, profession, reasons of eating there and frequency of their visits). We are gradually wining the villagers' confidence and will be able to collect information on the three main professional hunting camps located on the eastern side of the Pico (which are the only ones on this side and which are constituted mostly by villagers). The aim is also to gather data on volume of snaring undertaken by hunters.

## **5. Pilot Hunters interviews**

To assess the number of animals hunted using different methods and hunters involved, as well as the most important bushmeat species hunted, we are testing a hunters' questionnaire in which we ask hunters to record (for one month or more if possible) all animals hunted, whether juveniles or mature, sex, method of hunt and destination (which includes price, status, place of sale and type of buyer, in case of sale). Presently, we have already distributed 35 questionnaires in five different rural settlements.

## **6. Participation/information**

Before the start of the fieldwork we conducted two seminars: one to the students of Bioko Biodiversity Protection Programme (BBPP) and another to some other students of the Environmental Faculty but out of this programme. In these seminars, we explained general issues about the situation of bushmeat in Africa, in Equatorial Guinea and in Bioko, as well as the aims, activities and methods planned in our project. We encouraged students to participate, and there are now four students of the Environmental Faculty participating in the fieldwork. One of them is writing his final dissertation on this subject. We have also taught a third seminar, after 5 months of fieldwork, to report on the progress of the project. Besides BBPP and the Environmental Faculty, we presented our project to UNDP, FAO, The Spanish Cooperation Agency, Zoological Society of London, Conservation International and The Ministry of Fisheries and Environment of Equatorial Guinea (Ministerio de Pesca y Medio Ambiente de Guinea Ecuatorial, in Spanish). We have participated in seminars that the two last mentioned set up to discuss the "threats, root causes, and impacts" that affect the National Parks of Equatorial Guinea. As part of the study, we have also presented and discussed our project in 30 out of the 34 rural settlements surrounding Pico Basilé. Currently, we have one local assistant of Basilé Fang, who is actively working in the project recording all the species information that we mention above.

## **7. Analysis**

We are drawing up a database of food consumed and nutritional values (for its use in the project and accessible to organisations related to nutrition) and we are about to conduct some preliminary analysis.

## **8. Next steps**

Complete the gathering consumption and socio-economic data of human settlements surrounding Pico Basilé.

Complete data collection for estimation of bushmeat extraction in the study area.

Due to the unexpected death on 14th of January of one of our most important team members (as well as an irreplaceable colleague and friend), the UNGE teacher Claudio Posa, we will have to reassess the possibility of undertaking line transects and hunter-follows to determine status and distribution of main prey populations. Posa was an authority of this type of work and an exceptional connoisseur of the forest and hunters. We had planned for him to lead two of four groups planned to execute the line transects. He was also in charge of recruiting students and local assistants to do this work.