

## **Project Update: July 2015**

### **Bird surveys**

Added to the precedent list of birds, we identified eight more species: red billed teal (*Anas erythrorhyncha*), Madagascar lesser cuckoo (*Cuculus rochii*), dimorphic egret (*Egretta gularis dimorpha*), black-winged stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), helmeted guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*), hook-billed vanga (*Vanga curvirostris*) Madagascar pygmy kingfisher (*Corythornis madagascariensis*) and Madagascar scops owl (*Otus rutilus*).

From now we have recorded 43 species in total. According to Frontier Madagascar Organisation research report in the region in 2007 there are at least 63 bird species. Among these 63 species, 32 are either endemic to Madagascar or endemic to Indian Ocean region. All of them are classified as Least Concern in IUCN red list, except the Madagascar squacco heron (*Ardeola idae*) which is Endangered and Madagascar pratincole (*Glareola ocularis*) which is Vulnerable. These two species have been reported by Frontier in 2007.

### **Census and education**

To give us more information on the number of inhabitants living around the project site and in order to facilitate our contact with them we have update the census of the inhabitant of Anjiabe and Ampombofofo.

We got inhabitants repartition by district, households, and ages and for the children if they are being educated or not.

Regarding education, we affirm that the school is not opening every day due to the fact that parents could not afford the school fees for the teacher. We will have to study in deep in the future to find out solution to help kids of the villages to have better education.

### **Survey on charcoal production**

Surveys on charcoal production have been done to enable us to have information on the villagers' revenues. This will help us to know the money that people earn and will facilitate the repartition of the ecotourism benefit. In addition, the data collected from this activity will be crucial to help the community to ameliorate their economic life.

Anjiabe is a place where charcoal is produced, charcoal that will be consumed in the city of Antsiranana.

Generally, people cut down Lamonty tree (*Ziziphus mauritania*) for charcoal production. According to producers, Lamonty wood is strong and good for making charcoal, and it's commonly believed in Anjiabe that Lamonty tree grows faster after cutting.

As we interviewed almost all the men of the village, we noticed that some people do not make charcoal. They usually argue that the work is too hard. Then, among men who actually make charcoal, there is heterogeneity. For some of them charcoal production is their main source of income, for others it's just an additional income used for extra activities. We can say that Anjiabe is a village of charcoal producers and a village of cattle breeders which is become harder now due to dryness. Other sources of income are cattle, honey, corn,

bananas, fish, retail, house building. It's taboo for the local people to sell milk and zebu meat .They consume it and share it freely. Rice production is auto-consumed.

The price of charcoal varies from place to place. Usually one person produces between 30 to 40 bags and twice a year.

A bag cost 2 000 Ariary to 2 500 Ariary in Anjiabe, 3 000 Ariary in Ambanililana, 3 500 Ariary in La Dordon (Antsiranana) and 4 500 Ariary in town (Antsiranana).

Charcoal producers from Anjiabe sell their production to a retailer in Anjiabe or to a retailer in Ambanililana. If they don't have zebu cart, they pay 10 000 Ariary to transport 30 bags from Anjiabe to Ambanililana. Transport to Antsiranana cost 100 Ariary per bag, but it seems that most of Anjiabe's production is sold in Ambanililana hely.

The amount of charcoal production and the price varies in a year. Before the Independence Day (26/06) and end of year celebrations, there is a much bigger charcoal production and the cost decrease.

In the rainy season, most of the people are working in the rice fields, so charcoal is scarce and prices are higher than in the dry season.

### **Construction of a camping site.**

As we have now a tight relationship and collaboration with the local community in the project site, they gave the project a place where we would build a camping site. The camping site was built with the participation of the villagers. Everybody has brought their knowledge together to design it in a local way.

The project now has a camping site that can host the future gest of the ecotourism project. It is composed by a long shelter for tents, eating area and cooking area and we called it RAGADS CAMP, the name of the Association which was created during the first phase of this project (Research Assistant Group of Antsiranana, Diego-Suarez).



Left: Project camping place, Ragads Camp. Right: Team doing data analysis. Photo by Erika Rakotomalala.