

## Project Update: April 2020

### Activity 1: Lemur survey and forest patrol

As reported in the previous progress report, the guides that were trained in June 2018 are continuing lemur monitoring and forest patrols. They are working in a rotational schedule for 15 days per month. It is noted that the guides conducted only diurnal lemur surveys including for the blue-eyed black lemur (*Eulemur flavifrons*) and the gentle bamboo lemur (*Hapalemur occidentalis*). The guides followed two transects of 1.5 km and 2 km during each survey. In total they followed the two transects 150 times during the reporting period. We are now analysing data for lemur density.

It is noted that we are the first conducting biological research within the forest of Andilambologno thus it is still difficult to find the lemur species as they are still wild. The guides reported that they spent more time searching for lemurs during the dry season as the animals travel a lot searching for food. It is noted that the dry season coincided with the food scarcity. On the other hand, during the rainy season, which is the fruiting season, several groups gathered in one place thus it is easy to find the animals. The forest of Andilambologno has many tall trees (more than 15 m) thus the blue-eyed black lemurs were travelling or resting close to the canopy most of the time. The guides have had to use binoculars to count the individuals in a group.

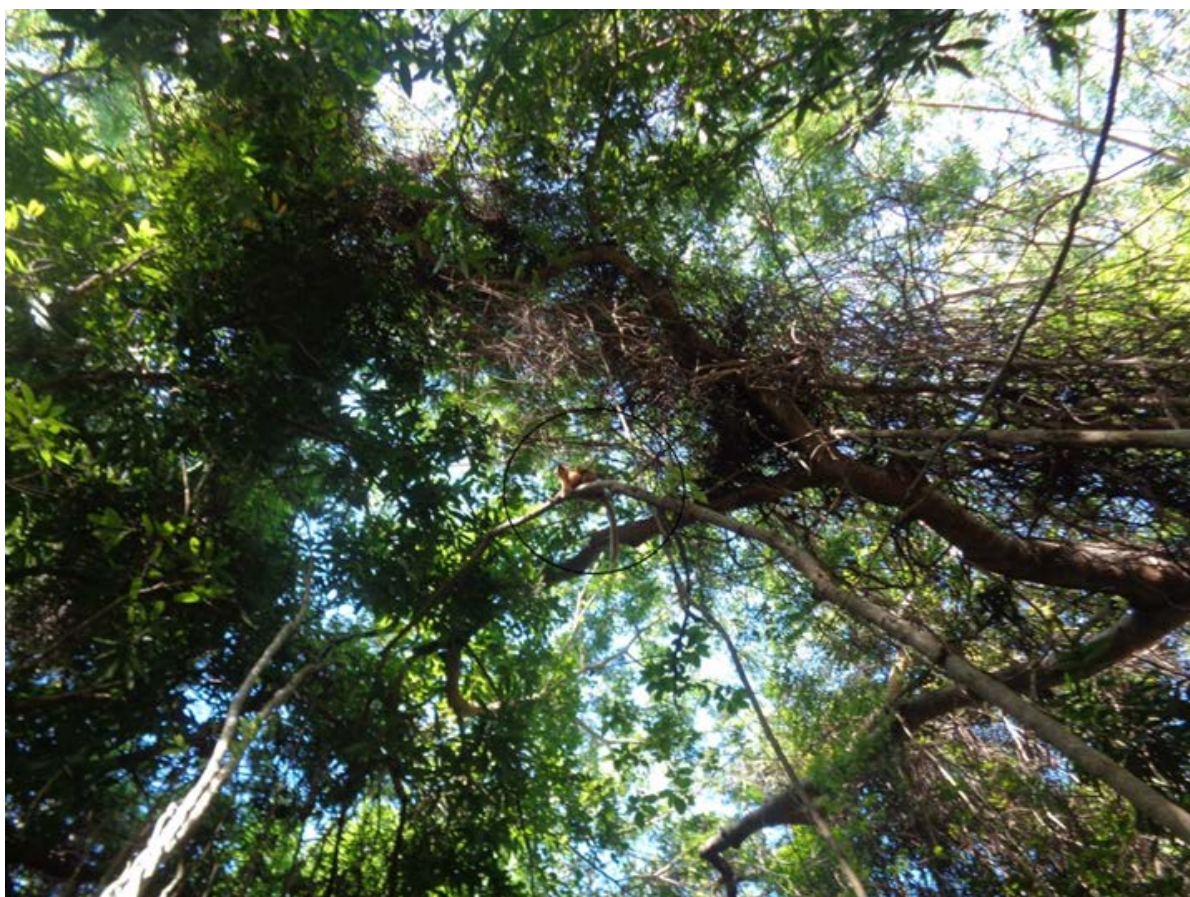


Photo 1: Female blue-eyed black lemur with her baby resting close to the tree canopy



**Photo 2: Male blue-eyed black lemur travelling close to the tree canopy**

**Remark:** The freshwater turtle is also occurring within the forest and the guides encountered this animal several times.

### **Activity 2: Restoration monitoring**

As reported in the previous report, we conducted a reforestation project surrounding the village of Mahitsihazo and within the forest in January 2019. In December 2019, the team carried out a monitoring within the reforestation site. Overall, the trees survived, and the mortality rate was about 20%. The team had noticed that the exotic trees had grown rapidly compared with the native trees.



**Photo 3: An exotic tree (*Acacia*) planted surrounding the village of Mahitsihazo.**  
**Photo 4: A native tree (*Dalbergia* sp.) planted at the forest border**

### Activity 3: Community Outreach

During the reporting period, we carried out two awareness raising exercises. The first community outreach was held in June 2019 during the celebration of the World Environment Day. We provided education about the biodiversity of the Andilambologno forest to the teachers and pupils. All teachers from primary schools within the three villages close to the project site including Mahitsihazo village, Marovato Sud village and Ambodimanga village were gathered within the village of Mahitsihazo. They were educated about the richness and importance of the biodiversity of Andilambologno, mainly lemurs, and the protection of its forest habitat. It is the first time that teachers were trained about importance of the site. A total of 20 teachers attended the environmental education training; the goal is that the teachers were made aware of the importance of the protection of the biodiversity and that they would educate pupils at schools. We also carried out environmental quiz for the children from the Mahitsihazo village. We highlighted our donor The Rufford Foundation training during the education awareness.



**Photo 5: Environmental education training for the primary schools' teachers from the villages close to the forest of Andilambologno. Photo 6: Sensitization of the school children from the Mahitsihazo village.**

The second awareness raising exercise was conducted during the celebration of the lemur festival in Antafiabe village within the Sahamalaza Iles Radama National Park. We participated in an environmental quiz and had a meeting with the primary school teachers in order to inform them about the biodiversity of the Andilambologno forest.



**Photo 7: Meeting with the primary schools' teachers during the lemur festival held in Antafiabe village**